

# **Ansaris of Yusufpur**

**ANCESTRY, HISTORY,  
CHRONOLOGY**



A JOURNEY ACROSS GENERATIONS  
LOVINGLY COMPILED BY

**MAHMUD ANSARI**

**ANŞARIS OF YUSUFPUR  
ANCESTRY, HISTORY,  
CHRONOLOGY  
BY MAHMUD ANŞARI  
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# CONTENTS

*Preface*

*Acknowledgements*

*Glossary*

Chapter 1 - Ansari - A word about the word

Chapter 2 - Our Ancestry – Foot prints to follow

Chapter 3 - Ansars embrace Islam – La Illaha Illullah

Chapter 4 - The Migration – On way to Madinah

Chapter 5 - The Prophet (SAW) enters Madinah

Chapter 6 - The Blessed House of Abu Ayyub

Chapter 7 - Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA) – Life,  
Profile, Contribution

Chapter 8 - Abu Ayyub Ansari – The Perpetual  
Scholar

Chapter 9 - The Relentless Warrior finally rests

Chapter 10 - Mazar-e-Aba Ayyub -A visit to  
remember

Chapter 11 - Move to Khorasan –Warriors move on

Chapter 12 - Khwaja Abdullah Ansari – Life &  
Accomplishments

Chapter 13 - Khwaja Abdullah Ansari – Religious  
Beliefs and Works

Chapter 14 - A tribute to Khwaja Abdullah Ansari –  
Dr. Annemarie Schimmel

Chapter 15 - Definition of a Darvaish – Khawaja  
Abdullah Ansari

Chapter 16 - Selections from Munajat Namah

Chapter 17 - Move of Ansars to India

Chapter 18 - Hakim Nabeena Ansari – Unmatched Vision

Chapter 19 - Hakim Nabeena Ansari –by Mulla Vahidy

Chapter 20 - I am looking for Hubb-e-Rooh-uz-Zahab

Chapter 21 - Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari–A life well lived

Chapter 22 - Accolades from Contemporaries

Chapter 23 - The Messiah moves – Medical Mission to Turkey.

Chapter 24 - Deeds Speak Louder than Words

Chapter 25 - Erudite Leader, Quintessential Gentleman - Mohammed Hamid Ansari

Chapter 26 - Partition of India – Ansars become Muhajirs- again

Chapter 27 - Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari – Neighbour of Data Ganj Bukhsh

Chapter 28 - The Montessorian Ansari – Abdus Salam Ansari

Chapter 29 - A Movie Star, a Writer, a Sufi - Masood Ahmed Ansari

Chapter 30 - Shining Stars of Yester Years - Masood *Family Tree (Shijra-e-Nasab)*

*Epilogue*

*Bibliography*

## PREFACE

### IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the Worlds. It is definitely a manifestation of His infinite mercy and magnanimity that He bestowed upon this weak and humble servant the honour of writing this book and conveying to our current and future generations His Message, the ways of His beloved last Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his host and companion, our ancestor Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA) and others in our lineage who attained the zenith of spiritual greatness.

The journey of writing this book began with an effort to compile an anthology so as to enable those who were interested in the subject to find what they were looking for under one cover. The prime objective was to provide our future generations an understanding of our roots, ancestors, historic events and accomplishments.

However, as I moved ahead, I soon realized that the continuity and flow that I had envisioned in the narrative was lacking. Most importantly, the message I had intended to send to our current and future generations was not being conveyed in as effective a manner as I had wished.

Thus the journey of compiling an anthology evolved into an odyssey – that of writing a book. In the process, I have lived through four thousand year history of our ancestors through the eyes of my imagination. I traversed deserts from Yemen to Yathrib, sailed to Qastuntuniya (Istanbul), climbed the mountains on way to Herat, swam across rivers and marched through plains to reach India. I my valiant ancestors fight, learn, teach and do what pleased Allah. It was an odyssey worth living for and I wish to share it with you.

Ansaris began their journey in this mortal world a few thousand years ago in the peninsula of Arabia, then called Araba. Little did anyone know that one of them would have the honour of being a host to our beloved last Prophet Muhammad (SAW). As Arab Islam took in its fold various other lands and nations, our ancestors, being valiant warriors, became part of just about every major battle that took place from Badr to Constantinople, Qandahar, Herat, and finally to India. It will have a profound impact on all of us, the Ansaris of Yusufpur, to know that we were not mere bystanders as history unfolded; we played important roles and made valuable contributions in the fields of religion, medicine, literature, law, politics and media.

Since this book is about one of the branches of Ansaris who arrived in India with the Mughal emperor Babur, i.e. the Ansaris of Yusufpur, they will be covered in

depth. However, it would also be of interest to all Ansaris whose ancestors moved from Madinah-e-Munawwara to other Countries of the Gulf, Middle East, Iran, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and other parts of the world. It is, after all, a common lineage and history that all Ansars share from the pre-Islamic era up to the period of Islam's expansion and this book will provide a ready reference for the origin and history of their ancestors.

It is important to emphasize that the hallmark of all branches of Ansaris, Ansaris of Yusufpur included, was an emphasis on piety, devotion to religion and pursuit of knowledge. Accumulation of wealth was never considered a worthy aim or a desired trait. The scions of Ansars of Madinah were, are, and will always be known for their abhorrence of worldly pomp and show and their unmitigated quest for the true purpose of life.

The Ansaris of Yusufpur have now spread from India to Pakistan, USA, UK, Canada and other parts of the World. It is incumbent upon our future generations, wherever they may be, to confidently take part in all fields of this mortal existence, enriched and emboldened by the knowledge of their proud and rich heritage, a heritage that would make them stand tall and walk with their heads held high.

Cognizant of the fact that our children, grandchildren and the future generations will be more at ease with English, this book is being written in the language they would understand better in the decades to come.

A thought may come to mind that this attempt to document the family's history is being made at a time when a few millenniums have already passed. Suffice it to say that it is never too late to start chronicling for posterity. Even otherwise, families tend to excel for a period, go dormant, come back to life, produce a genius here, a saint there, a statesman to add flavour and gain prominence, go through a hiatus, and then surface again. And thus the cycle of life goes on.

It is equally important to dispel the impression that the generations that went un-noticed between shining stars of different periods written about here were of no consequence. It was in fact the continuity of excellence in grooming and upholding family values by those scores of the unsung and untold that bore fruit in the shape of eminent luminaries who graced different eras.

Having said so, I feel that a number of outstanding personalities from our ancestors have not been included in this volume due to lack of written material on them. To avoid it to happen in future, we must write about our heroes and their achievements for the benefit of our future generations.

In the end, I pray that all of us keep the torch of piety, knowledge and true love of Allah burning in our hearts so that our future generations may continue in the same tradition.

*Mahmud Ansari*

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Sana Ansari for proof reading the text, making valuable suggestions and corrections along the way.

Lastly to my wife, for putting up with the extended hours spent on research and writing of this book and patiently bearing the loss of the only person in our home she could talk to.

## GLOSSARY

1. (AS) - Alayhi s-Salam - Meaning Peace be upon him.
2. Asr Prayer - Third prayer. Performed between Zuhr (Afternoon) and Maghrib (Evening) prayers.
3. Bayet (Bayah) – Oath of allegiance to a leader or spiritual master.
4. Dar-ul-Uloom - House of Knowledge - A University.
5. Dastarkhwan. A cloth spread on the floor to eat food on.
6. Dewan - A wooden seat.
7. Faqir - A Muslim Sufi ascetic - A wandering dervish teaching Islam and living on alms.
8. Fiqh - knowledge about Islamic legal rulings from their sources.
9. Hadith –What the Prophet Rasulullah (SAW) said, did, approved, and disapproved of, explicitly or implicitly.
10. Hafiz - One who has learnt Quran by heart.
11. Hakim. A person practicing eastern system of medicine, also called Unani (Greek) System of medicine
12. Halal - Permissible to do or eat.
13. Hikmat. Practice of Eastern/Unani medicine.

14. Irfan - Literally means knowing/awareness, or having an insight into the unseen.
15. Kamil – Arabic word meaning perfect.
16. Manqabat - Devotional poem written in the praise of a Sufi saint.
17. Matab - A Hakim's clinic.
18. Miraqaba. Meditation
19. Muhaddis- One who specializes in the Sayings of the Rasulullah (SAW).
20. Murshid – Spiritual Guide and teacher.
21. Nisbat – derived from the Arabic word Nisba, an adjective indicating the person's place of origin, tribal affiliation, or ancestry, used at the end of the name
22. Paithay Ki Mithai. An eastern sweet made from a kind of Gourd.
23. Qutub - A Sufi spiritual leader having a Divine connection with God but he is unknown to the world. There is only one Qutub per era. He is only revealed to a select group of mystics.
24. RA - Abbreviation for radiyallahu taala anhu.
25. SAW - Abbreviation for Sallallahu Alayhi Wassallam.
26. Siha Sitta - The six authentic books of Hadith Interpretation by the six acknowledged scholars, i.e. Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik,

Abu Daud, Al-Tirmidhi, Al-Nisai and Ibn-e-Maja.

27. Silsila - A branch of Sufis, such as Qadriya, Chishtia, etc.
28. Tafseer - The science by which the Quran is understood, its meanings explained, and its rulings derived.
29. Tahhajud - A special prayer about two hours before Fajr (Early Morning Prayer), said to take a person very close to Allah.
30. Takht - A Wooden low chaise used for sitting and sleeping.
31. Tauheed – Tauheed in Arabic means attributing Oneness to Allah and describing Him as being One and Unique, with no partner or peer in His Essence and Attributes.
32. Tayammum - Using soil to wipe one's face and hands with the intention of purification and preparing to pray when water is not available.
33. Wudu - Ablution before prayers.
34. Ziarat – To visit a place of religious significance.



**MAP SHOWING MOVE OF ANSARS  
FROM YEMEN  
TO MADINAH, CAIRO,  
QASTUNTUNIYA  
(ISTANBUL) AND HERAT**

# 1

## ANSARI

### A Word about the Word

Prior to discovering the roots of Arab tribes who later on came to be known as Ansaris, it is appropriate to briefly talk about the origin, meaning and use of the words Ansar, Al-Ansari and Ansari.

Ansar is a Nisbat. It is derived from the Arabic word '*Nisba*', an adjective indicating the person's place of origin, tribal affiliation, or ancestry. The word *Nisba* became Nisbat when adopted in Persian, Turkish and Urdu, where it is pronounced and written exclusively as *Nisbat*.

When our holy Prophet Rasulullah (SAW) arrived in Yathrib (Madinah), he formed two groups of Muslims, the Muhajireen and the Ansars. Muhajireen were those who migrated from Makkah to Madinah either earlier, with or after the migration of our holy Prophet (SAW). Ansars were the residents of Madinah and surroundings who helped Muslims (Ansar literally means helpers) in their immigration, became their brothers in Islam and shared their homes and belongings with them, other than laying their lives in various battles with the infidels.

Thus, the word 'Ansari' (Al-Ansari in Arabic) originates from the word Ansar, the people of Medina who invited

and devoutly followed and served our holy Prophet, Rasulullah (SAW) and his companions after they had moved to Medina. This title was considered to be a great honour by the tribes of Yathrib and was adopted as a surname along with the references to their tribes. An example would be the name of our ancestor Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari. His name appears in Arabic scriptures as Abu-Ayyub Khalid ibn-e- Zayd al-Khazraji al-Najjari al-Azdi Al-Ansari, though he is commonly known as Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari. This name establishes his Nisbat to all the tribes and sub-tribes he belonged to, ending in his main and major Nisbat, accorded around the time of the migration of our holy Prophet Rasulullah (SAW) to Madinah.

### **Usage of the Nisbat Ansari**

Ansari is used as a surname by a number of communities in the Middle East and South Asia. The name does not signify common descent. However, it does signify that the person is a descendant of one of the Ansars of Madinah.

### **Ansaris in Various Regions**

#### **Middle East**

‘Al-Ansari’ is commonly used as a surname in many Arab States. Historically speaking, it was not used as a surname amongst Arabs, but as a form of patronymic.



The word was added as a title to the end of the name if the person had an ancestor who was an Ansar.

As a surname, Al-Ansari is mostly used in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar.

## **Iran**

Unlike Arabs, Iranians use Ansari as a surname, such as Tabatabai, etc. A number of Ansars who took part in the conquest of Khorasan and the Persian Empire chose to settle in the region and continued to use 'Ansari' as a surname. Ten generations of Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari's direct descendants lived in and around Herat (now Northern Afghanistan) and settled there. They are also known to have moved to other parts of Iran and a number of families with the surname 'Ansari' are found there.

## **Pakistan and India**

The surname Ansari is used in Pakistan, northern India and Bangladesh to show a lineage or ancestral link to the Ansar of Medina. Through various waves of migration from the Arabian Peninsula, Iran, Central Asia, and Afghanistan, descendants of the Ansar tribes arrived in the Indian subcontinent with various rulers coming from the North, culminating in the establishment of the Mughal Empire by Babar. Five descendants of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari (RA) arrived in India and settled in

Yusufpur, Lucknow, Aligarh, Saharanpur and Kakori. As descendants of great scholars and Sufi masters they spread Islam wherever they went and produced outstanding scholars whose fame spread to all parts of the Muslim World. Who can deny the tremendous impact Farangi Mahal had on Islam in the sub-continent? This one branch of Ansaris alone has produced more scholars and has more books to its credit than all of the other schools combined. Termed as the “Cambridge of India”, it has spread the light of knowledge where darkness once prevailed.

The major impact of the arrival of Ansaris in the Indian Sub-Continent was that a very large number of natives became their disciples and adopted the surname ‘Ansari’ as a mark of reverence to their spiritual leaders.

The main original settlements and concentrations of Ansaris in the Indian subcontinent are in:

**India:** Banaras, Panipat, Kairana, Allahabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Meerut, Aligarh, Saharanpur, Gangoh, Ghazipur, Yusufpur, Gorakhpur, Ballia, Moradabad, Kakori and Lucknow.

**Pakistan:** Lahore, Multan, Gujranwala, Lilla, (western Punjab) and the Sindh province. Thaheem tribe in Sindh also claim to be Ansaris. The ancestral link from Medina was brought to Sindh, Pakistan, by the descendants of Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA) as members of Mohammed Bin

Qasim's army when he invaded Sindh in 711 AD. Some of those early Ansaris settled in Paat, district Dadu, Sindh and soon became well-known for their knowledge of Islam and piety, attracting a large number of followers.

## 2

# OUR ANCESTRY FOOTPRINTS TO FOLLOW

The roots of Ansars can be traced back to the times when the World was formed and divided in to different land masses, such as Arabia, Sindh, Hind, etc. Arabia was inhabited through different annals of history by three major tribal groups. They were:

Baidah.

Aarbah.

Mustarabah.

Baidah: Baidah were tribes who ruled Arabia after the great flood in the era of Noah. However, all of them became extinct due to the wrath of Allah or vagaries of times. Aad, Samood, Amaleeq, Jadees, Tasam etc. were the Arab Baida tribes.

Aarbah: Aarbah were contemporaries of Baidah and they ruled Arabia after Baidah. Qahtan, Saba, Humair etc. were some of the prominent Aarbah tribes.

Mustarabah: Mustarabah were the tribes from the generation of Hazrat Ismail bin Ibrahim R.A. They lived in the northern parts of Arabia. After the death of Hazrat Nabit bin Ismail, his descendants spread throughout Arabia. One of such branches called Azd settled in Yemen at a time that cannot be determined from the

available historic records. However, they moved from Yemen due to the flood of Aram, mentioned in the Quran as follows:

*Indeed there was for Saba (Sheba) a sign in their dwelling place, - two gardens on the right hand and on the left (and it was said to them) "Eat of the provision of your Lord, and be grateful to Him, A fair land and an often Forgiving Lord! (15) But they turned away (from the obedience of Allah), so We sent against them Sail Al Arim (flood released from the dam), and We converted their two gardens into gardens producing bitter bad fruit, and tamarisks, and some few Lote trees. (16) Like this We requited them because they were ungrateful disbelievers. And never do We requite in such a way except those who are ungrateful, (disbelievers). (17) Surah Saba (34) - verses 15 to 17*

Thus the great dam of Marib, 50 feet wide and 150 feet long, built between two mountains, was destroyed. Remnants of this dam are still present and provide a testimony of Allah's wrath faced by those who disobey Him.

Before or after the flood of Aram, the tribe of Azd migrated from Yemen. The leader of the tribe at that time was Umru bin Aamir alias Muzaiqiah. Muzaiqiah's great grandchildren were Aus and Khazraj. All tribes of Ansars originate from these two brothers.

Azdi tribes moved from Yemen to Syria, Iraq, Najd (Central Saudi Arabia today) Oman, Yamamah, Bahrain and other parts of Arabia. A branch of these tribes settled in Saalbiah. When their numbers increased, they left Saalbiah and moved to Yathrib (Madina-e-Munawwara). These Aus and Khazraj tribes came to be known as Ansars later on.

It would be appropriate to mention that Arab historians generally regard Ansars as Qahtanis, hence Araba. However, in the light of research this has been found to be incorrect. Ansars were Mustarabah and descendants of Hazrat Nabit bin Ismail. This position has also been researched and convincingly advocated by Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadvi in “Arz-ul-Quran” volume 2 and by Maulana Saeed Ansari in “Sair-e-Ansar” Volume 1. Their detailed research proved that Ansars were Mustarabah and descendants of Hazrat Nabit bin Ismail.

Initially, as new comers, Ansars lived in subjugation and poverty. However, with the passage of time, and after having established friendly relations with the Jew tribes of Yathrib, they also constructed their abodes and forts, thus solidifying their position. Yet, for a long time they continued to pay levies to the Jewish tribes of Banu Quraizah and Banu Nuzair. Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadvi in his authoritative work “Arz-ul-Quran” says:

Aus and Khazraj, though superior in strength and physical abilities, were inferior to the Jews in wealth, trade and life skills. Thus they were highly influenced and impressed by them. As a consequence, the religious influence of Jews also started to affect them. Aus and Khazraj used to make a pledge for a sick son that if he lived, they would make him a Jew.

This superiority of Jews prevailed for a considerable period. However, Aus and Khazraj also gradually progressed in numbers as well as wealth. Along with prosperity came the natural desire for freedom and sovereignty. On the other hand the Jews had also become aware of these sentiments and thus lack of trust developed between the two nations. It was Jews themselves who provided an opportunity for this lack of trust to grow in to a full-fledged war. Historians have provided an interesting incident that led to the downfall of the dominant position and strength of Jews. It is narrated as follows:

The leader of the tribes of Aus and Khazraj was Malik bin Ajlan, and the leader of Jews was Faitoon (some historians have recorded his name as Faitwan also). Faitoon was actually the ruler of Jews as well as Aus and Khazraj as they had accepted his hegemony as per the agreement between the two parties. Faitoon was cruel and morally bankrupt. He had issued an order that whenever a girl of Yathrib got married; she would spend

the first night with him prior to going to her husband. Jews and Ansars had to accept this order, albeit under duress. However, a virtuous girl belonging to Aus and Khazraj kindled the sense of honour of her tribes from slumber. The girl was no other but a sister of Malik bin Ajlan, Chief of the tribes of Aus and Khazraj. Per chance, she got married during that period. Prior to proceeding to her husband's home, she came to the court of her brother with her calves bare, considered a shameful act. Malik bin Ajlan was furious and scolded her. She confronted him by saying:

“Brother, you are angry on seeing my bare calves. I wonder how you would tolerate the despicable act of me sleeping with an unrelated man prior to joining my husband”.

On hearing these words from his sister, Malik bin Ajlan vowed to put this shameful practice to an end, even if it would be at the peril of his life. He thus entered the palace of Faitoon disguised as a woman with the female entourage accompanying his sister, and finding the right opportunity, killed Faitoon with a single stroke of his sword. Thereafter, he escaped from the palace and reached the domain of the Ghassani King of Syria, Abu Jabila. Banu Ghassan, Aus and Khasraj shared the same lineage. When Malik narrated the account of cruelty and debauchery of Faitoon to Abu Jabila, his tribal and hereditary honour made him vow that unless he taught a



lesson to the Jews of Yathrib, he would not rest in peace. Thus an army of Ghassanis under the command of Abu Jabila moved and garrisoned at a place (Zee Hur) close to Yathrib. The Jews had no inkling of his plans. Even if Abu Jabila attacked, they could easily enter their forts and defend themselves from there. Therefore, Abu Jabila used a novel tactic. The first night of his arrival, he invited notables of Aus and Khazraj, and entertained them lavishly, bestowing upon them expensive gifts. The second night he invited notables of Jews, indicating that they would be similarly honoured. On arrival, they were taken to a tent and killed. Thus the hegemony of the Jews of Yathrib and the inhuman dictates of Fatoon came to an end that day.

The tradition of protecting their honour was thus enshrined in the psyche of Aus and Khazraj, the ancestors of Ansars, and the tradition continues to this day. Ansaris are known to defend their honour at any cost. They prefer to die fighting for it than to live without it.

Aus and Khasraj enjoyed exceeding prosperity and power for a long period. They grew in wealth and their numbers multiplied till their sub-tribes reached between eighty and hundred. A brief narration of their expansion is as follows:

Aus: He had one son, Malik. Malik had five sons who led to the formation of following tribes:

Umru Bin Malik–Abdul Ashal – Banu Zafar.

Auf Bin Malik – Banu Umru Bin Auf.

Hasham (Abdullah) bin Malik. Banu Hutma.

Umra-ul-Qais Bin Malik – Banu Waqif.

Marra Bin Malik – Banu Saad, Banu Aamir, Ummaya, Wail and Atiya.

Khazraj: He had five sons. They led to the establishment of the following tribes:

Hasham Bin Khazraj – Banu Tazeed, Banu Salma and Banu Biada.

Auf Bin Khazraj – Banu Al Hablah, Banu Qawafil, Banu Salim.

Haris Bin Khazraj – Banu Khadra and Banu Khadarah.

Umru Bin Khazraj – Banu Najjar (Maternal side of Hazrat Abdul Matlib R.A. and tribe of Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA)).

Kaab Bin Khazraj – Banu Saeda. Chief of Ansars Hazrat Saad Bin Abada belonged to this tribe.

Thereafter, and due to the Bedouin psyche of the pre-Islamic period, Aus and Khazraj started to fight with each other. The internecine feuds between the two prior to the advent of Islam are known in the Arab history as the period of the Ansars (Ayyam-ul-Ansar). This

situation prevailed for over one hundred and twenty years. It is believed that these years saw at least a battle per year between the two tribes.

The last battle fought between Aus and Khazraj was the Battle of Buaas. It was fought five years prior to the Hijrat (migration) of our beloved last Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Majority of the historians feel that the Battle of Buaas became the prelude to migration of Rasulullah (SAW). In the words of Hazrat Ayesha R.A., "Allah had made the battle of Buaas to happen for Rasulullah (SAW). When Rasulullah (SAW) arrived, the Ansars had substantially weakened due to in-fighting. Their leaders had been killed. Hence Allah made this battle a reason for their welcoming Rasulullah (SAW) and accepting and Islam.

Nabateans were considered to be the most cultured from amongst the descendants of Banu Ismael. Since Aus and Khasraj were also Nabateans, they held a distinguished position amongst the tribes in pre-Islamic period. They lived their lives based on the principles of democracy. Their leader, who was at times also the commander of the Army, was selected mutually after thorough debate and deliberations.

As long as Aus and Khazraj were united, their Chief was usually from Khazraj. However, when the differences arose between the two, they started selecting their own

Chiefs. Khazraj was led by Banu Saeda and Aus chose Abdul Ashal family for the position. Appointment of Commander of the Army met similar fate.

Soon, due to differences arising within different branches of the same tribes, each branch resorted to choosing their own leader. After the Battle of Buaas, Aus and Khasraj had reached the height of division and enfeeblement. Sensing their downfall, they agreed to choose an influential and impartial person called Abdullah bin Ubbi from Khazraj as their king. However, dawn of Islam was to change the course of events in a totally different direction.

In spite of inter-tribal feuds, Aus and Khazraj had managed to provide the status of a small state to Madinah. They had constructed a number of forts and walls around various localities. A wall, called Sur-e-Madinah, had also been built around the densely populated city. Due to abundant population, forts and walls, Madinah had become a formidable location. Rasulullah (SAW) had also named it strong armour (Dara-e-Hateena).

The military establishment of Aus and Khasraj was not based on the pattern of a regular army. All able bodied men became soldiers when the need arose. Feuds were not fought under any special system. If one of the parties ran and entered its locality, it was generally not followed.

The bystanders were not harmed by either side. Ansars made their own weapons, or bought them from the Jews, who were experts in making them. Ansars buried their dead even prior to converting to Islam, and had established graveyards in different parts of Madinah for the purpose.

The Ansars were totally dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. They tilled land and developed orchards. The land was fertile; thus they were generally prosperous. Some of them adopted trade as a profession. However, Trade on the whole was dominated by Jews, who had a lot of Bazaars in the vicinity. Ansars also followed and established a few markets of their own as well. Most of the trade was conducted through barter, as use of coins was not prevalent.

Ansars did not generally develop themselves in various crafts and industry. However, some of them acquired skills for local use such as barbers, weavers, carpenters and butchers.

Ansars had little preference for education, and were basically illiterate. However, some of them could read and write Arabic. A few of them also knew Hebrew. They took interest in social welfare, and had made quite a few bridges for the common good of the people. They considered establishing watering points for passers by an act greatly rewarded by Allah. Like the other Arabs,

Ansars were also exceedingly hospitable. Keeping one's promise was considered to be a matter of great honour and the promise was to be kept even at the peril of one's life. In matters of personal hygiene, they were ahead of other Arabs and were the first to use water for ablution in addition to stones. In matters of inheritance and marriage their standards were despicable. They married their step mothers and did not give any share to their daughters from their inherited assets.

Prior to the dawn of Islam, Ansars' religious beliefs were no different than the rest of the Arabs. They were grossly illiterate and idol worshippers. Ibn-e Hisham writes in "Al Siratul Nabuya":

"Aus and Khazraj believed in many deities. They were idolaters. They were unaware of heaven, hell, re-awakening, the Day of Judgment, scriptures and pure and impure things."

In the olden days Aus and Khasraj worshipped "Laat and Manaaf", two famous idols of those times. Later on, they chose Manaaf as their favourite deity. A stone statue of Manaaf was erected on a mountain called Mushlal in the proximity of Red Sea. They considered Manaaf, deemed a female, to be the goddess of life and death, and all benefits accrued from her. They also kept her wooden idols in their homes.

This fact is mentioned in Quran:

*“They (all those who worship others than Allah) invoke nothing but female deities besides Him (Allah)”.*

*Surah Nisa (4) verse 117*

They believed in sacrifice of animals and also performed a distorted type of Haj. They abstained from fighting during the Haj period. Overall, their general moral condition was better than the other tribes of Arabia as they considered acts of moral turpitude despicable and carried out some form of accountability for social crimes.

What has been written so far provides a brief snapshot about our ancestors, the Ansars, from the earliest times up to the dawn of Islam. Ansars were idol worshippers. Jews believed in one Allah. Ansars were highly influenced by them. They would go to the extent of taking the pledge that if an ailing son survived, they would make him a Jew.

On the other hand, the Jews looked down upon Ansars in spite of being inferior to them in strength. They considered them ignorant and idol worshippers. Jews of Madinah called themselves ‘people of the book’. They used to read their books to Ansars in Arabic. In the Jewish scriptures, arrival of the last Prophet had been predicted. The Jews not only believed in this prediction but had also passed on this information to the Ansars. Thus, prior to the dawn of Islam not only Jews were waiting to welcome the last Prophet, Ansars had joined

them in the wait as well. However, the same Jews who longed so eagerly for the arrival of the last Prophet, and who had made Ansars aware of this belief, did not avail the opportunity as this great honour was written in the destiny of the “ignorant idol worshippers” of Madinah.



### 3

## ANSARS EMBRACE ISLAM LA ILAAHA ILLULLAH

Aus and Khazraj were originally idol worshippers. However, presence of Jews in their vicinity had introduced the concept of oneness of Allah (Tauheed) to them to some extent. What was more significant was that the Jews had passed on their belief about the arrival of the last Prophet to them. In addition to the Jews and Ansars, the Christians also believed in the arrival of the last Prophet. Jews believed that with the arrival of the last prophet they would once again dominate Ansars. Christians believed that the prophet would be their messiah and would rid them of the cruelties and injustices of the Jews. Thus, all three major communities of Madinah were anxiously waiting for the new dawn.

During that period, a person named Suwaid bin Samit, belonging to the tribe of Aus, wielded considerable influence in Madinah. He was handsome, brave and well versed in the art of warfare. In addition, he was also a prolific writer and an acknowledged poet. Due to his well-groomed and multi-talented personality, he was known as '*Kamil*', or perfect. Suwaid had managed to obtain a copy of '*Chronicles of Luqman*'. To introduce Hakim Luqman, It would be appropriate to mention a few words about him and his chronicles here.

Luqman was a well-known personality of the Eras bygone. He was known for his wisdom and his knowledge and grasp of various issues had made him a proverbial figure and a house-hold name. He is mentioned in Quran as follows:

*And indeed We bestowed upon Luqman Al-Hikmah (wisdom and religious understanding) saying: "Give thanks to Allah," and whoever gives thanks, he gives thanks for (the good of) his own self. And whoever is unthankful, then verily, Allah is All Rich (Free of all needs), Worthy of all praise. (12). Surah 31 (Luqman) verses 12*

According to Quran, Hakim Luqman advised his son to strictly adhere to the following principles of life:

Do not enjoin others in worship with Allah. Doing so is a great Zulm (wrong) indeed.

Be dutiful and good to your parents. But if they make you enjoin others in worship of Allah, then do not obey them.

Pray regularly and on time.

Ask people to do good deeds and save themselves from vice.

Bear with patience whatever hardship befalls you.

Do not turn your face away from men in pride.

Do not walk arrogantly on the earth. Most definitely, Allah does not like arrogant boasters.

Be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking.  
Lower your voice. Indeed, the harshest of all voices is the  
braying of the ass.

It is said that Hakim Luqman had a very long life. In his  
last days he moved in the vicinity of Ramalah (Palestine  
today) and Jerusalem and died there.

Being a wise person, when Suwaid read the Chronicles of  
Luqman, he was greatly influenced. He learnt a lot from  
the book and became acquainted with the idea of  
Tauheed. He took these chronicles to be a holy scripture  
and considered following the instructions contained  
therein an act of submission and piety. The fame of  
Suwaid's personality and beliefs spread far and wide. Not  
only did he become a leading figure of Madinah, but also  
of Makkah, where his name became synonymous with  
knowledge and wisdom.

Suwaid went for Haj (in whatever way or shape Haj was  
performed in those days) and met the Rasulullah (SAW),  
who had received the Nabuwwat by that time. On  
coming to know that Suwaid was in Makkah, Rasulullah  
(SAW) visited him and invited him to accept Islam.  
Suwaid replied:

“What you have, I already have”.

Rasulullah (SAW) asked “What do you have”?

Suwaid replied “I have the Chronicles of Luqman”.

Rasulullah (SAW) said “I have something better than that”.

Suwaid asked him to prove it. Rasulullah (SAW) recited a few verses from the Quran. Suwaid was profoundly impressed and developed a very strong affinity for Islam. On his return to Madinah, he narrated its strengths to the people. The Ansars of Madinah were favourably inclined. Unfortunately, Suwaid was killed by a member of Khazraj. Had he lived, he would have been a staunch supporter of Islam in Madinah.

### **First Muslim of Yathrib**

As mentioned earlier, that era had come to be known as “The times of Ansars” due to in-fighting between the two tribes of Aus and Khasraj for one hundred and twenty years. After having suffered two consecutive and crushing defeats, a delegation of Aus went to Makkah to attempt to make Quraish their allies against Khazraj. Ayas bin Muaz, a noble person, was also a part of the entourage. When Rasulullah (SAW) heard the news of their arrival, he approached them and invited them to convert to Islam. He also recited a few verses from Quran. Ayas was highly impressed. He addressed the members of his entourage. “Brothers, accepting this religion are better than the task we have come here for”. However, others did not agree with him.

On return to Madinah, Ayas continued to propagate the oneness and greatness of Allah. He died prior to the migration of Rasulullah (SAW) to Madinah. However, he left an indelible impression about the virtues of Islam on Ansar who held him in high esteem due to his piety. It is said that while he was about to breathe his last, he was reciting the praise of Allah and His oneness. Thus, he is claimed by historians as *the first Muslim of Madinah*. In being so, he also became the first Muslim Ansari. This distinction alone makes him a much revered and cherished personality for Ansaris all over the world. May Allah be pleased with him and reward him with a choicest abode in Paradise.

### **Six Noble Souls**

It was a routine for Rasulullah (SAW) to approach pilgrims visiting Makkah for Haj and invite them to embrace Islam. He also visited various tribes and invited them to do the same as well. The tribal elders were less than inclined, and so were the pilgrims. However, in the 11<sup>th</sup> year of prophet-hood, a strange, yet welcome, situation developed. Rasulullah (SAW), during one of his routine invitational visits, reached tents of some noble souls from Madinah. They belonged to Khazraj and were six in number. Due to the proximity of Jews and information received from Suwaid and Ayas bin Muaz, they had been indirectly introduced to Rasulullah (SAW) and the message of Islam. When Rasulullah (SAW)

started his sermon about the oneness, absolute grace and greatness of Allah and also recited a few verses from the holy Quran, they were stunned. They conferred with each other and became convinced that he was the last Prophet that the Jews used to talk about so often. Afraid that the Jews will take lead in accepting the new religion, they recited Kalma-e-Shahadat and became Muslims right then and there.

Acceptance of Islam by these six noble souls was tantamount to the dawn of Islam for Ansars. They returned to Yathrib and started spreading the message of Islam with full force and conviction. The historians have opined that due to their untiring efforts, Islam became a house hold name in Madinah. A large number of people announced their acceptance of Islam.

## **The First Oath of Uqba**

When the Haj season began the next year, twelve Muslims from Aus and Khazraj proceeded to Makkah for Haj and to be blessed by meeting Rasulullah (SAW).

When Rasulullah (SAW) came to know of the arrival of this group from Madinah, he went to Mina at night at a point known as the depression of Uqba (where a Masjid has been built now). The Muslims from Madinah were camped there. They reverently welcomed Rasulullah (SAW) and swore their allegiance (Bait) to him with six promises. They were:

They will not enjoin any other deity with Allah.

They will not steal.

They will not indulge in adultery.

They will not blame others falsely.

They will not kill their daughters.

They will follow Rasulullah (SAW) in all of his good instructions.

After they had sworn their allegiance, Rasulullah (SAW) advised them that if they kept their word, they will be rewarded with Paradise. However, if they did not do so, then it would be up to Allah to forgive them or to punish them. This oath of allegiance is known as the first oath of Uqba.

Prior to their return to Madinah, the group requested Rasulullah (SAW) to send a teacher with them to

acquaint them and other residents of Madinah with Quran and Islamic teachings. Rasulullah (SAW) assigned the task to Musab bin Umair R.A. and sent him with the group to Madinah so that he could live there and spread the message of Islam.

On reaching Madinah, Musab bin Umair stayed at Asad bin Zararah's home and became busy in spreading the teachings of Islam with full force and vigour. Due to his noble character and heart winning attitude Islam started to spread in every household of Madinah. However, the chiefs of Aus and Khazraj had still not become Muslims, and this had started to become a hindrance. Soon, Allah provided a way to remove this impediment as well.

One day, Musab bin Umair went to an orchard belonging to Banu Abdul Shehel (a branch of Aus) and began teaching tenets of Islam to the Muslims. Asad Bin Zararah was also with him. Someone reported to Saad bin Muaz that Muslims were busy in misleading people in his neighbourhood. Saad was furious but controlled his temper due to Asad bin Zararah, who was his cousin, and chose not to go there himself. Instead, he sent his step brother Usaib bin Huzair to admonish the Muslims and warn them not to enter the localities inhabited by members of Aus.

Usaib was a brave man. He picked up his spear and left for the site alone. When Asad bin Zararah saw him



coming, he said to Musab bin Umair: ‘He is one of the two Chiefs of Aus. If he accepts Islam, it will be a great source of strength for the Muslims’.

As soon as Usaid arrived, he addressed Musab: ‘You are misleading our people. If you wish to remain unharmed, leave our locality and never return again’.

Musab bin Umair listened to the chastisement with patience and replied softly: ‘Dear brother, please sit down and listen to what I have to say. If you like it, accept it. If you don’t like it, reject it by all means’.

The impeccable manners, soft tone and sweet words of Musab worked like water on fire. Usaid pushed his spear in the earth and sat down, saying ‘OK. Say what you have to say’.

Musab put forward a few golden principles of Islam in his effective and sweet voice, and then recited a few verses from Quran. Having listened to the sermon, Usaid was highly impressed, and said pleadingly: ‘Wow, what a good religion and wonderful verses they are. Please allow me to embrace your religion right away.’

Musab asked him to take a bath and wear clean clothes. That having been done, he made him recite the Kalma-e-Shahadat and Usaid thus became a Muslim.

After becoming a Muslim, Usaid said: 'There is another person. If he embraces Islam, the whole tribe will become Muslims'.

Having said so, he went straight to Saad bin Muaz and presented his views in these words: 'The matter is quite different than what was presented to you earlier. I feel it is important for you to visit the site personally'. Saad was aggravated further on hearing this report. He picked up his spear and reached the location and started furiously apprising Musab bin Umair and others of the dire consequences of their presence in that area. Asad bin Zararah requested him to be patient and listen to what Musab had to say. He also re-iterated that if he liked what he heard, it would be better, or else he could decide for himself.

On Asad's insistence, Saad sat down. Musab narrated the tenets and strengths of Islam and then recited a few verses of Quran. The impact on Saad bin Muaz was tremendous. His heart was enlightened with the spirit of Islam and he also announced his conversion on the spot.

When he returned to his tribe, he collected his people and asked them: 'How do you perceive me as a person'? They replied: 'You are our leader. You are the wisest and have the most grasp on matters as compared to us'.

Saad replied: 'Listen to me carefully. I have accepted Islam as my religion. Unless all of you accept Islam, it is forbidden for me to speak to you'.

On hearing this, most of the Banu Abdul Shehel became Muslims on the spot. Those who hesitated also accepted it by the evening, barring a few. The surroundings resonated with the thunderous recitation of the Kalma Tayyaba and Takbeer. The effect of acceptance of Islam by Chiefs Saad bin Muaz and Usaid bin Huzair was such that all of the families of Ansars belonging to Aus started accepting Islam eagerly.

Many members of Khazraj had already embraced Islam including Saab bin Abada, their Chief. That proved to be the driving force for the remaining members of Khazraj to join the majority and they also entered Islam with fervour.

Musab bin Umair was one of the staunchest supporters of Islam and it was due to his untiring efforts that Madinah soon became a bastion of Islam, and remains so to this day. May Allah be pleased with him and grant him a choicest place in paradise.

Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA), our ancestor, and a person famous in Madinah for his nobility and character, also embraced Islam due to the teachings and efforts of Musab bin Umair (RA) All Ansaris of the World, therefore, owe their gratitude to this great companion of

Rasulullah (SAW) and should remember him in their prayers.

## 4 THE MIGRATION ON WAY TO MADINAH

Life in Makkah had become unbearable for the Muslims due to atrocities perpetrated on them by the Infidels of Makkah. During the first thirteen years of prophet-hood, harsh punishments and torture inflicted upon those who had accepted the new faith wrote a new chapter in barbarism and inhumanity. However, in spite of suffering these brutalities, Rasulullah (SAW) and his followers remained steadfast and did not waver from their faith.

On one hand the Infidels of Makkah were making life difficult for the Muslims, and on the other the residents of Yathrib (later day Madina) were sending invitation upon invitation to Rasulullah (SAW) beseeching him to migrate to Madina. Tempting as it may have seemed, Rasulullah (SAW) was waiting for a signal from the All Mighty without which no amount of atrocities would make him move. However, after the oath taking of Uqba whereby a delegation from Madina had embraced Islam, he asked those of his followers who could undertake the journey to move to Madina. Thus the majority of the companions of Rasulullah (SAW) moved, leaving behind their homes, properties, businesses, friends and associates. Thereafter, only Rasulullah (SAW), Hazrat

Abu Bakr Siddique and Hazrat Ali Ibn Abi-Talib from amongst the well-known companions were left behind. Also left behind were those weak and poor Muslims who could not move due to their condition and they have been referred to in Quran as “*Mustazaifeen*”.

### **Infidels’ Conspiracy**

At last, after a few days, the time came when the light of Makkah, the reason for it being the hub of the Earth, the holiest of Prophets Rasulullah (SAW) was to migrate in the tradition of the prophets of yore. The Infidels of Makkah provided ample grounds to do so through a heinous scheme. They convened a grand gathering of all of their well-known leaders to decide upon a way to martyr Rasulullah (SAW). So far they had refrained from doing so due to the apprehension that the wrath of Banu Hashim, the tribe of Rasulullah (SAW) as well as his followers would lead to bloodshed on a gigantic scale. Finally, it was decided at the behest of Abu Jehl that they would select a warrior from each tribe. This group of select warriors would attack Rasulullah (SAW) simultaneously. As such, Banu Hashim would not be able to take on all the tribes. At the very most they would ask for blood money and that would not be a big problem to pay. Abu Jehl’s proposal was appreciated and agreed to by all those present and thus the conspiracy to eliminate Rasulullah (SAW) was hatched. It was further decided that the chosen warriors would surround the

house of Rasulullah (SAW) at night, and as he emerged from the house, all of them would attack him simultaneously.

While this heinous conspiracy was being hatched, Hazrat Raqeeqa Bint Saifi, a niece of Rasulullah (SAW), was close by and listened to the entire discussion. She moved swiftly and apprised Rasulullah (SAW) of the situation. Angel Gabriel A.S. had already arrived with the message by then, and had conveyed the order of Allah for him to migrate to Madina.

### **Preparations to Migrate**

On receipt of the permission to migrate to Madina, Rasulullah (SAW) went to the house of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique. It was the peak of a hot day, and he had put a cloth sheet on his head as protection from the sun. Prior to that, he used to usually visit Hazrat Abu Bakr twice a day, but never in the afternoon. Therefore, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique immediately sensed that something important had happened. He warmly welcomed Rasulullah (SAW) and having made him seated, paid full attention to what was to be said. Rasulullah (SAW) said: "I have been ordered to migrate, and I am due to leave for Yathrib". Hazrat Abu Bakr inquired: "May my parents be sacrificed on you, will I be blessed with accompanying you"? On receiving a reply in affirmative, his eyes were filled with tears. Hazrat Ayesha Siddiqah,

who at time was quite small, said later: “I did not know that men can cry even when happy. I found it out that day”.

Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique had waited for this day for months. He had also kept two stout female camels ready for the journey. He presented one of them to Rasulullah (SAW), who accepted it only on the condition that he would pay for it. Thereafter, Rasulullah (SAW) returned to his home. He then called Hazrat Ali Ibn-e-Abi Talib and said to him: “I have been ordered by Allah to migrate. I will leave for Yathrib tonight. However, I am concerned about the valuables placed with me in trust by people. You should lie on the spot where I usually do and use my green sheet to cover yourself. You will be protected by Allah and will not be harmed. In the morning return all items held in trust, and then you too come over to Yathrib”.

### **The Migration Begins**

As per their plan, infidels surrounded the abode of Rasulullah (SAW). Sometime at night, Rasulullah (SAW) emerged from his house, and walked through the circle of infidels reciting:

*“And We have put a barrier before them, and a barrier behind them, and We have covered them up, so that they cannot see”.*

*Surah 36 (Ya-Seen) verse 9*



Allah covered the eyes of infidels in such a way that they could not see Rasulullah (SAW) even though he walked right through them.

Thereafter, Rasulullah (SAW) went to the house of Hazrat Abu Bakr' Siddique, who was ready and waiting anxiously for him. He hastily prepared for the journey. His daughter Hazrat Hafsa had cooked meals for a two to three days journey. She tied the food in a cloth and made it fit to last through the long journey. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique also collected whatever money he had so that the same could be used while being away from home.

Late at night Rasulullah (SAW) , in the company of his true and honest companion left Makkah and had a break journey at a Cave called Soor located at a distance of three or four miles from Makkah. The reason for the brief stay in the Cave was to avoid being followed and located by the infidels. It was an old cave and had a lot of holes made by different insects and reptiles. On entering it, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique closed the holes using pieces of his cloth sheet. Only one hole was left as there was no more cloth left to close it. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique used his foot to close that hole so that no insect may bother Rasulullah (SAW). Being tired, Rasulullah (SAW) went to sleep, putting his head in the lap of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique. It will be appropriate to mention here an example of extreme devotion and affection of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique for his beloved

last Prophet (SAW). While Rasulullah (SAW) was asleep, the hole closed by Hazrat Abu Bakr using his foot was actually the den of a snake. Finding the exit closed, it bit him on his toe. The pain of the bite hurt him greatly, but he did not remove his foot from the hole to avoid exposing Rasulullah (SAW) to the poisonous snake. He did not even move lest Rasulullah (SAW) be disturbed in his sleep. However, due to severe pain tears rolled down and fell on Rasulullah (SAW)'s face. He woke up and asked him what had happened. Hazrat Abu Bakr submitted that he had been bitten by the snake. Rasulullah (SAW) put his saliva on the bite mark and the pain and effect of poison disappeared immediately.

While Rasulullah (SAW) and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique were in the cave, the infidels were anxiously waiting for him to come out his house. They peeped through the crevices in the doors a number of times, and took Hazrat Ali to be Rasulullah (SAW). At the break of dawn Hazrat Ali Murtaza got up from the bed instead of Rasulullah (SAW). The infidels were shocked. They got hold of Hazrat Ali and manhandled him but he did not utter a word. Subsequently they incarcerated him in Khana-e-Kaaba. However, having found this measure to be of no use, they released him after some time. Thereafter, they reached the house of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique. Abu Jehl knocked at the door. His daughter Asma bint Abu Bakr answered. He asked angrily: "Where is your

father”? “I don’t know”. She replied. On hearing the answer, he got infuriated as he believed that she was not telling the truth. He slapped her on the face so hard that his fingers left impressions on her face and her earring fell out. Yet she did not display any sign of pain. Abu Jehl and his gang earnestly started search for Rasulullah (SAW) and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique. In doing so, they reached in close to the cave Soor. On hearing their voices, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique became worried. He expressed his concern to Rasulullah (SAW) and said that the enemy had almost reached them. Rasulullah (SAW) calmly replied: “Don’t be sad. Allah is with us”.

As a manifestation of the reach of all mighty Allah, a spider wove its web on the mouth of the Cave. A pair of pigeons made their nest there and laid their eggs. On seeing these two signs that proved that nobody inhabited the cave, the infidels did not enter the cave and returned dejected and hopelessly unsuccessful. Having failed in their criminal aspirations, Abu Jehl and others announced a reward of a hundred camels for anybody who would arrest Rasulullah (SAW).

Rasulullah (SAW) and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique stayed in the Cave for three days. Aamir Bin Fuhaira, a slave of Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique who had been set free by him used to bring his goats while grazing near the cave and presented their milk to the two exalted beings. Abdullah

bin Abi Bakr and his sister Asma used to discretely bring food and news of the day for the two.

After the stay of three days, both luminaries emerged from the Cave. Abdullah bin Abi Bakr had brought two strong and speedy she camels for the journey. Accompanied by Amir Bin Fuhaira, a slave freed by Hazrat Abu Bakr and Abdullah bin Uraiqt Laissi, a non-Muslim but trustworthy guide, they commenced the long and arduous journey. Following the advice of Abdullah bin Uraiqt Laissi, direct route was deferred in favour of the long route along the coast.

As narrated in various books on the subject, the very first day they stopped at the tent of Umm-e-Mobid Atika located at a place called Qadeer. Umm-e-Mobid and Abu Mobid lived in that tent and looked after the travellers using that route. When the holy entourage arrived, Abu Mobid had gone with the healthy and milking goats for grazing them. One of the two asked Umm-e-Mobid if she had something to eat. She replied that if she had anything, she would have presented it to them herself, being the norm.

A feeble goat was tied in a corner. Rasulullah (SAW) asked Umm-e-Mobid about the goat. She replied that being too weak it could not go for grazing with the herd. Rasulullah (SAW) asked if the goat had milk". She replied in negative. He said: "If you permit me, can I

milk her”? She replied that if the goat could give milk, he was most welcome to do so. Rasulullah (SAW) prayed, said Bismillah (In the name of Allah) and started milking her. A large bowl was filled. Rasulullah (SAW) and his companions drank it. Another bowl was filled. It was also consumed by the holy entourage. He then filled the third bowl, and left it to be consumed by Umm-e-Mobid and departed on his journey.

When Abu Mobid returned home, he was surprised to see the bowl filled with milk, as he knew the weak goat left behind could not produce it. He asked Umm-e-Mobid about it. She narrated the whole incident. He asked her to describe the personality of the visitor. She said:

*Noble and capacious face, well-mannered, neither a bulging tummy nor the hair thinned and shed, handsome, large and black eyes, hair thick and long, deep voice, straight neck, bright and kohled eyes, thin and enjoined eyebrows, quiet, dignified, impressive and well-dressed from a distance, handsome and sweet when near, well thought about and measured speech, words neither more nor deficient, dialogue like pearls in a string, average height, neither short to diminish one's persona nor too tall to look odd to the eye. (Zaad Al Mayad).*

Abu Mobid, on hearing this, said: I am sure that he is the great personality from Quraish. I will definitely meet him.

According to one historian, Umm-e-Mobid had become Muslim on the spot. However, according to others, she migrated to Yathrib along with her husband and both of them embraced Islam and took the oath of allegiance in the presence of Rasulullah (SAW) in Madina.

Umm-e-Mobid narrated later on that the goat that was milked by Rasulullah (SAW) stayed with them up to the time of Hazrat Umar Farooq (RA), she milked her twice daily and benefitted from it.

Having come to know the announcement of huge reward by Quraish for arresting Rasulullah (SAW), a famous horseman Saraqa Bin Malik of the Banu Madlaj tribe started his chase on his speedy mare. Someone informed him about a few Silhouettes moving in the dark along the coast. They could possibly be Rasulullah (SAW) and his companions. Saraqa took the same route, and galloping his mare at full speed, reached the holy entourage. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique said: "The enemy has reached us". Rasulullah (SAW) replied: "Do not be worried. Allah is our protector and saviour". Exactly at the same time Saraqa's mare tripped and he fell. It was not a good omen, but greed for a huge reward made him get up and try to move ahead. This time the mare sank in sand up to

her knees. Saraqa lost his will and said: “O, Muhammad, I will not follow you any further, and if I find someone doing the same on my way back, I will ask him to return as well. Please get me out of this trouble I am in”.

The most kind-hearted and compassionate Rasulullah (SAW) prayed for Saraqa. His mare emerged from the sand. He was highly impressed. As a mark of gratitude he presented an arrow to Rasulullah (SAW) and said: “It is my mark of recognition. At a particular point on your way my slaves are grazing the camels. Please take as many slaves and camels and whatever else you need for your journey.” Rasulullah (SAW) replied: “We do not need anything”.

Saraqa was so impressed with Rasulullah (SAW) that he asked him to write a note granting him safety. Rasulullah (SAW) asked Amir Bin Fuhaira to write the note, who did so on a piece of leather and handed it over to Saraqa. Thereafter, Saraqa returned to Makkah.

Abu Jehl came to know through an informer that Saraqa had found Rasulullah (SAW) but had let him go unharmed. He admonished Saraqa, who replied: “If you had seen my condition, and the condition of my mare, you would not have admonished me. It would be better for you to forget about Rasulullah (SAW). I can see that he is going to reach the zenith soon”.

Other accounts also mention that other than Siraqa, another person by the name of Buraida Aslami was followed Rasulullah (SAW) along with seventy men with evil intent. However, when he met Rasulullah (SAW) he was so influenced that he became a Muslim along with his men. He placed his turban on his spear and proceeded ahead of the holy entourage to announce the good news of the prophet's arrival.

On his way, Rasulullah (SAW) also came across Hazrat Zubair Bin Al-awwam, who was returning from Syria after a business trip. He presented precious white fabrics to Rasulullah (SAW) and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique.

### **Arrival in Quba**

The residents of Madinah had received the news of Rasulullah (SAW)'s arrival. The entire city waited anxiously for the great moment. Each and every child, man and woman of the Ansars was filled with joy in anticipation of the historic moment. Their desire to see Rasulullah (SAW) arrive at Madinah was so strong that they used to walk out of the city for a few miles in the morning every day in sweltering heat to a place called Harra and waited for Rasulullah (SAW), and returned in the afternoon, dejected due to non-arrival of the holy entourage. Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari was one of those who used to follow this routine.



Rasulullah (SAW) , having travelled through Khirar, Madalja, Marhaj, Hadaid, Zakhir, Raabigh, Qaha, Arj, Kartaba, Abka, Aqeeq, etc. reached the vicinity of Quba on Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> Rabi-ul-Awwal, 14<sup>th</sup> Hijri. As was the routine, the Ansars, having waited the whole day for his arrival, were returning dejected without having their dream fulfilled. Fortunately, a Jew who was positioned at a vantage point saw the entourage approaching and immediately realized that it was the same that was being eagerly awaited for by the entire city. He called out to Ansars and gave them the good news. On hearing it, the Ansars became ecstatic. Finally, the moment for which they had waited for so eagerly had arrived. They expressed their jubilation by raising slogans of “Allah-O-Akbar”. Even those who were in their homes adorned their weapons, as was the custom, and ran towards Quba to welcome Rasulullah (SAW).

Rasulullah (SAW) sat in the shade of a date palm. The Muhajirs (Immigrants from Makkah) who had arrived in Madinah earlier as well as the Ansars gathered and started presenting their salutation and allegiance to him. Rasulullah (SAW) had got tired due to the long journey that stretched over eight days. He, therefore, decided to stay in Quba for a few days. This decision was a source of great joy and honour for the residents of Quba.

Quba was located at about three miles from Madinah. The land was level and suitable for habitation. Quite a

few sub tribes of Ansars had settled there. One of them was Banu Umr Bin Auf, a branch of the tribe Aus. The chief of this sub tribe was Kulsoom Bin Al-Hadam. The honour of being the host of Rasulullah (SAW) in Quba was destined for him. Rasulullah (SAW) selected his house to stay. However, to meet people and bless them with his advice and teachings, Rasulullah (SAW) used to come to the house of Hazrat Saad Bin Khusaimah. Prior to the migration of Rasulullah (SAW), Muslims sometimes offered their Friday prayers at that blessed abode. The location of this house is not available as it was included in the extension of Masjid Quba but the location of the house of Kulsoom bin Al-Hadam is marked by a few boulders to the south-west of Masjid Quba.

It was a time of great joy from both sides. Rasulullah (SAW) addressed the people of Quba as follows:

*“O People give unto one another greetings of peace; feed food unto the hungry; honour the ties of kinship, pray in the hours when men sleep. Even so shall ye enter paradise in peace.”*

After three days, and after handing over items held in trust as assigned to him by Rasulullah (SAW) , Hazrat Ali (RA) also left Makkah and joined Rasulullah (SAW) in Quba.

**Construction of Masjid-e-Quba**

The first project that Rasulullah (SAW) started with his blessed hands was the construction of a Masjid. The land where the Masjid was decided to be built was the date drying area belonging to Hazrat Kulsoom Bin Al-Hadam. When he found out that Rasulullah (SAW) had wished to build a Masjid, he most willingly and happily presented this land for the purpose. Thereafter, Rasulullah (SAW) laid the foundation of this great Masjid and the construction began. The following verses of holy Quran refer to this blessed Masjid as follows:

*There is a Masjid whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy of thy standing forth (for prayer) therein. In it are men who love to be purified; and Allah loveth those who make themselves pure.*

*Surah 9 (Al Tawbah) Verse 108.*

As per Sahih Bukhari and Muslim, Rasulullah (SAW) used to come from Madinah to Quba every Saturday and offered two Rakat Sunnat there. In the construction of this blessed Masjid he worked as an ordinary worker. Al-Tabarani quoted Al-Shimous Bint Al-Nuaman as saying, "I saw the Prophet when he constructed this Masjid. He used to carry stones and rocks on his back until it was bent. I also saw dust on his dress and belly. But when one of his companions would come to take the load off him, he would say no and asked the companion to go and carry a similar load instead."

Abdullah Bin Ruwaha (The Martyr of Mouta), a renowned poet of Ansars, used to recite the following of his verses while taking part in the construction:

*Successful is the one who builds the Masjid  
And recites Quran sitting  
and while standing (all the time)  
And does not sleep at night  
forgetting everything (prayers).*

Rasulullah (SAW) used to join him in reciting each verse.

Another unique distinction and honour of this great Masjid is that Rasulullah (SAW) led the first group prayer from there. Al-Aqsa Masjid in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) was the Qibla at that time.

It is incumbent upon us, the Ansaris, to always offer two Rakats Nafil in this great and the earliest Masjid built by Ansaris and Muhajirs, on a land humbly presented by an Ansari, whenever we are blessed with the honour of visiting Madinah Munawarah.

## THE PROPHET ENTERS MADINAH

*The land of Yathrib became envy of the Sky*

*The Light of truth made Yathrib*

*A source of envy for Mount Sinai*

*Yathrib by being Prophet's abode*

*Became Madinah*

Hafeez Jallundhury

### A Glorious Day

The day Rasulullah (SAW)'s feet touched the soil of Yathrib will always be remembered as a glorious day in the annals of Islam's history. After performing Friday prayers, Rasulullah (SAW) asked for his camel, Qaswa, to prepare for departure. The site saddened residents of Quba. They came and stood in front of the camel and beseeched: "O Prophet of Allah, have we erred and displeased you for any reason that you wish to move to better quarters? Rasulullah (SAW) replied: "I have been ordered to go where I am going".

The prophet had already sent the message to Banu Najjar about his journey. Jubilant and adorned with their weapons, they arrived at Quba to accompany him on the auspicious occasion. The Prophet placed halter on his camel and mounted it. Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique

followed. The people of Banu Najjar and all tribes of Yathrib stood all along the way as well as moved ahead and behind the holy entourage. Their weapons reflected the sunlight, making the onlookers blink. Some of them accompanied him on foot; others on camels and horses; their shouts of joy and Takbirs resounded everywhere.

### **First Friday Prayers**

As the entourage reach Banu Salim, a neighbourhood on the outskirts of Yathrib, it was time for prayer. Rasulullah (SAW) stopped alongwith his companions and led the prayer. It was the first Friday prayer and the first Friday sermon delivered by Rasulullah (SAW).

### **Unprecedented Welcome**

Rasulullah (SAW) entered Yathrib from the south. The rousing welcome accorded to him remains unparalleled in the history. That day, Yathrib became Madinah-e-Munawarah, and its soil became a source of envy for the sky. It shall uphold this stellar honour and position till the end of the World.

Rasulullah (SAW) proceeded toward the centre of Madinah at a leisurely pace. The city wore a festive look. This holy city that would have the honour of becoming

the centre of Islam in the days to come was virtually dancing with joy. It was awash with the happiness of embracing Rasulullah (SAW) and being the place of abode for him.

The women and children were livening up the scene with poems they recited:

*O the full moon has risen over us from the Valley of  
Wada  
We Shall Forever Give Thanks for It  
As Long As There Will Be Callers to Allah  
O you who were raised amongst us  
Have come back with the message  
That must be obeyed!*

The people of Madinah thronged the streets to see the Prophet's blessed face which emanated brightness. The children wore their best clothes and played happily. The women on the roofs and men in the streets were calling out to him, "Welcome!" "Muhammad has come! O Muhammad, O Messenger of Allah! O Muhammad, O Messenger of Allah!"

Accompanied by this hearty and emotional salutation, Rasulullah (SAW) continued to move forward on his camel, Qaswa, in a unique style that combined modesty and sedateness. Banu Najjar was in a state of jubilation, hoping that they would be honoured by hosting Rasulullah (SAW).

## **Qaswa Knows Where to Stop**

While Rasulullah (SAW) was proceeding, the owner of every house that he rode past wanted to have the honour of entertaining him and held the halter of his camel, saying, “O Messenger of Allah! Please come to our house!”

The Prophet answered them by smiling and saying, “Let the camel go; She has been told where to stop.” The blessed animal proceeded by looking to the right and left.

## **Qaswa Crouches**

With its halter around its neck, Qaswa proceeded towards the residences of Banu Malik of Najjar and crouched on her knees on an empty plot of land.

The Prophet did not dismount at once. After a while, the camel got up, walked a few meters and returned to the same place where it had crouched. This time, it did not stand up. She put her neck and chest on the ground and started braying lightly and moving right and left.

Everybody was looking at Qaswa. Was Rasulullah (SAW) going to be a guest at the place where she had crouched or somewhere else? Nobody had any idea.

Meanwhile, innocent little girls of Banu Najjar were playing tambourines, welcoming him:



*“We are the daughters of Banu Najjar.*

*The relationship and neighbourhood of Muhammad are so nice!”*

Rasulullah (SAW) answered the sincere feelings and joys of the innocent children with smiles and asked them, “Do you love me?”

All of them said, “Yes, we love you, O Messenger of Allah!”

*The Master of the Universe said, “Allah knows that I love you, too! By Allah, I love you, too! By Allah, I love you, too! By Allah, I love you, too!”*

Every Muslim of Madinah heartily wanted Rasulullah (SAW) to honour his house. When Qaswa crouched, Jabbar bin Sahr kicked her in order to make her stand up. Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari noticed it and became highly annoyed. He said, “O Jabbar! You kicked her to make her stand up in front of my house. I swear to Allah, who sent Muhammad with the true religion, that I would have hit you with my sword if Islam did not prohibit it!”

### **The Prophet Honours the House of Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari**

When Qaswa crouched for the second time and did not get up, the Prophet said, “With the permission of Allah, this is the place where I will stay.” and dismounted his camel.

Thus, the migration of Rasulullah (SAW), one of the most stellar events of the history of Islam and the world, ended with the dismounting of the Prophet.

The Muslims were waiting, curious and excited. Whose house was Rasulullah (SAW) going to honour? Everybody was happy and overwhelmed with emotions. They wanted to enhance their joy and happiness by entertaining the Prophet in their houses.

The Prophet asked the people around him. "The house of which relative of us is nearest?"

Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari from Banu Najjar said, overwhelmed with joy, emotions and excitement, "O Messenger of Allah! My house is the nearest! It is my house. That is the gate." showing his house. Then, he said, "Will you let me carry the things on the camel there?" On being permitted, he removed them and carried them to his house.

Thereupon, the Prophet said, "A person stays where his animal and things are." Then, he said to Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, "Go and prepare a place to entertain us!"

Meanwhile Asad bin Zarara, one of the notables of the Muslims of Madinah, took Qaswa to his house to bring good luck.

Hazrat Abu Ayyub al-Ansari went to his house and prepared it to receive the exalted guest. Thereafter he

returned and said, “O Messenger of Allah! I have prepared places for both of you. Please proceed to your place with the blessings of Allah.”

Among cheers, Rasulullah (SAW) stood up and went to the house of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari. Thus, this beloved Companion had the honour of entertaining the master of the Universe.

With the arrival of Rasulullah (SAW) in Madinah, the Muhajirs (Migrants), who were sad since they were away from their homes, became happy and joyous. Madinah was full and excitement and resembled a place of festival.

Bara bin Azib, a Companion, describes the joy and excitement of that exceptional day as follows:

*“I have never seen the people of Madinah rejoice as much as they rejoiced when Rasulullah (SAW) came to Madinah. I saw women and children shout enthusiastically, ‘Rasulullah (SAW) has come. Muhammad (SAW) has come!’”*

Anas bin Malik from Ansar, who was a child then, attracts attention to the magnificence and brightness of that day:

*“I have never seen a finer, brighter and more magnificent day than the day when Rasulullah (SAW) arrived in Madinah!”*

## **Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari Narrates**

Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, the host of Rasulullah (SAW) *narrates:*

“When Rasulullah (SAW) honoured our house, he stayed on the ground floor. My wife Umm-e-Ayyub and I were on the first floor.

I said, ‘May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, Ya Rasulullah (SAW)! I do not want to be upstairs while you live downstairs. I will not feel good. Please, move upstairs and we will stay downstairs.’

Rasulullah (SAW) said, ‘O Abu Ayyub! It is better and more appropriate for us to live downstairs.’ and continued to stay downstairs. We were living over them in the house. Meanwhile, one night our pitcher, full of water, broke. We feared that the water drops would fall on Rasulullah (SAW) and disturb him. Therefore, we tried to stop the water by putting our velvet quilt on the water at once.”

Rasulullah (SAW) found it more appropriate to stay downstairs because many people used to visit him and he was able to meet and talk to them easily.

However, Abu Ayyub, the great believer, and his wife, felt disturbed and restless. They thought, ‘How can Rasulullah (SAW) be downstairs while we are upstairs.’

One night Hazrat Abu Ayyub woke up and could not sleep again due to that feeling. He moved some of his belongings to another part of the house and sat up all night.

In the morning, Hazrat Abu Ayyub told Rasulullah (SAW) what had happened. However, Rasulullah (SAW) said, 'Downstairs is better for me.'

The great Companion could not bear it anymore and said, Ya Rasulullah (SAW)! It is impossible for me to stay upstairs while you are downstairs!

Thereupon, Rasulullah (SAW) moved upstairs and Abu Ayyub and his wife Umm Ayyub moved downstairs.

Rasulullah (SAW) stayed in the house of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari for seven months. During that period, the Muslims of Madinah (Ansar) virtually competed with one another to offer food to the Prophet and to meet his needs.

Rasulullah (SAW) does not like the Smell of Onion and Garlic.

The Muslims of Madinah brought food regularly every day to Rasulullah (SAW), who settled in the house of Hazrat Abu Ayyub al-Ansari.

Hazrat Abu Ayyub and his family always prepared dinner for him and ate what the Prophet left.

One evening, they sent him a dish containing onion or garlic.

Rasulullah (SAW) returned the dish!

When Abu Ayyub (may Allah be pleased with him) did not see any change in the quantity of food in the dish, he went to Rasulullah (SAW) hurriedly and said, “Ya Rasulullah (SAW), May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! You returned the dish without eating anything last night!”

Rasulullah (SAW) said, “I do not like garlic. I smelt garlic in the food today and that is why I did not eat it. I do not want to disturb my friend, Jibril. Angels are disturbed by the things that humans are disturbed with.”

Thereupon, Abu Ayyub said, “Ya Rasulullah (SAW)! Is that food Haram?”

Rasulullah (SAW) said, “No. However, I did not like it due to its smell”

Abu Ayyub said, “Then, I do not like what you do not like, either!”

### **A Miraculous Feast**

One day, when Rasulullah (SAW) was staying in the house of Hazrat Abu Ayyub. Hazrat Abu Ayyub brought

food that was enough for two people to Rasulullah (SAW) and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique.

The Prophet said to him, “Go and invite thirty people from the notables of Ansar!”

Hazrat Abu Ayyub obeyed the order. Thirty people came and ate from that food.

Then, he said, “Invite sixty more people!”

Hazrat Abu Ayyub invited sixty more people. They came and ate too.

Then, Rasulullah (SAW) said, “Invite seventy more people!”

Hazrat Abu Ayyub obeyed that too. Seventy people came and ate.

Hazrat Abu Ayyub later narrated:

“There was still some food in the pot. Those who came to eat became Muslims when they saw that miracle. One hundred and eighty people ate the food that I had prepared for two people!”

It was a miraculous feast of Rasulullah (SAW). Those miracles concerning the blessings of abundance illustrate that

*“Muhammad (SAW) is such an honoured servant, and such a beloved envoy, of the Merciful and Munificent One Who provides his sustenance and creates the*

*sustenance for all beings, that He changes His own custom for his sake and sends for him in case of need such banquets from the Unseen as He created from nothingness.”*

*Badiuzzaman Said Nursi ibid, p. 123*

Thus Banu Najjar and Abu Ayyub Ansari became the most fortunate and honoured inhabitants of Madinah. We, the descendants of Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari, must remember our history and the role this great companion played in the service of Rasulullah (SAW) and Islam. It is indeed this linkage that exhorts us to try to become worthy descendants through our deeds and deeds alone, as all references to lineage will become meaningless when we are finally presented before Allah to answer for our stay in this temporary world.



## THE BLESSED HOME OF ABU AYYUB

The blessed home that had the unique honour of being the abode of Rasulullah (SAW) was situated in the south east corner of the Masjid-e- Nabwi. The house situated south of it belonged to Hazrat Harsa bin Nauman, which later on became known as the house of Hazrat Jafar Sadiq (Dar Jafar Sadiq). In the North was a street named Zaqaq Habsha. Adjacent to it was the house of Hazrat Hasan bin Zaid.

This house underwent a lot of changes. The most significant change took place when Malik Shahabuddin Ghazi bought it, converted it in to a Madrasah and named it “Madrasah-e-Shahabia”. He dedicated it to the teaching of all four major schools of jurisprudence. Thus the house of the “Perpetual Scholar” of Islam continued to be a beacon of knowledge spreading the light of the teachings of Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, Imam Shafi’i & Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal.

At the end of thirteenth century it was reconstructed again and from a madrasah it was converted in to a Masjid with a dome and arch. An epitaph was placed on its external wall with the inscription “*This is the house of Abu Ayyub Ansari and the first residence of Rasulullah (SAW) whose latest reconstruction was done in 1291 Hijri*”.

At the onset of 15<sup>th</sup> Century Hijri the largest expansion of the Masjid-e-Nabwi was carried out under late King Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud. This house also became a part of the expansion and thus ceased to exist. Location of this house is being provided and it is incumbent upon all Ansaris to offer

two Rakat Nawafil on that spot whenever they have the honour to visit Madinah and the Masjid-e-Nabwi.

## LOCATION OF THE HOUSE OF ABU AYYUB ANSARI



**THIS IS THE APPROXIMATE SPOT  
WHERE THE HOUSE OF HAZRAT  
ABU AYYUB ANSARI (RA) EXISTED.**



## HAZRAT ABU AYYUB ANSARI LIFE, PROFILE, CONTRIBUTION

As Ansaris of Yusufpur are descendants of Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari, it would be appropriate to present details of the life of this illustrious companion and host of Rasulullah (SAW). It would be a worthy reminder to us, as well as to our future generations, that in order for us to associate our names with an august personality such as him, we must endeavour to make our lives reflective of the characteristics of piety, hospitality and bravery that were the hallmark of this great companion and warrior of Islam.

### **Birth and Early Life**

Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari was born thirty one years before Hegira (Migration). At birth, he was named Khalid ibn Zayd ibn Kulaib. Ayyub was his teknonym (Kuniyah in Arabic), (the name of an adult derived from his/her eldest child in Arab societies).

### **Family**

Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari married twice. His one wife was Umme Hassan bint Zaid bin Harris. She gave birth to a son named Abdurrahman, who died in his youth.

His second wife was Umme Ayyub Ansaria. She is famous in the history and a number of Ahadith are attributed to her. She used to cook for Rasulullah (SAW). She had three sons; Ayyub, Khalid and Muhammad, and a daughter named Umrah. The descendants of Abu Ayyub Ansari grew in numbers and also progressed otherwise. Shaikh-ul-Islam Pir-e-Hirat Khwaja Abdullah Ansari was one of his descendants. He will be written about in detail later. Four sons of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari moved to India and the Ansaris of Yusufpur are the descendants of one of them.

### **Lineage**

Born Khalid, son of Zaid, son of Kulaib, son of Saalbah, son of Abd-e-Auf Khazraji, he belonged to Banu Najjar, a branch of the Khazraj tribe of Ansars. Ansars and Khazraj have been written about in considerable detail in the earlier chapters. However, it would not be out of place to mention the highly honoured position Ansars and Banu Najjar held and narrate a few incidents that lead to further enhancement of their stature.

### **Position of Banu Najjar**

Ansars have been mentioned in the holy Quran as follows:

*Those who believed and left their homes and strove for the cause of Allah, and those who took them in and helped them - these are the believers in truth. For them is*

pardon, and bountiful provision.  
*Surah 8 (Al-Anfal) – Verse 74*

Even though Rasulullah (SAW) considered Banu Najjar to be the best branch of Ansars and he had bestowed upon Abu Ayyub Ansari, a member of this branch, the greatest honour of being his host, yet he further awarded them with another timeless honour during the construction of the Masjid-e-Nabwi. When Hazrat Saad Bin Zararah, chief of the tribe, died, the people of Banu Najjar appeared before Rasulullah (SAW) and requested him to appoint a chief for them. Rasulullah (SAW) most graciously announced “You folks are my maternal uncles. Therefore now I am the chief of Banu Najjar”.

After the battle of Hunain, Rasulullah (SAW) gave a greater part of the spoils of war to the newly converted Muslims of Quraish. This led to heartburning amongst some of the younger Ansars. When the news travelled to Rasulullah (SAW), he collected all of them and explained in detail as to why he had decided to give a larger portion to the newly converted Muslims of Quraish. In the end he addressed them as follows: *O Ansars, would you not like that the others take camels, goats and wealth to their homes, and you take Muhammad to your homes? On hearing this, the entire group of Ansars wept bitterly and said “We only want Muhammad, Rasool Allah”. At the end, Rasulullah (SAW) addressed the Ansar and said “Ansars are mine I am of Ansars. O Allah, have mercy on*

*Ansars and their sons*”. He further said that the newly converted Muslims were given more to satisfy their hearts, not because they deserved more.

It is important to mention that the great grandmother of our holy prophet (Salma, mother of Hazrat Abdul Mutlib) also belonged to Banu Najjar. Banu Najjar, though a distinguished sub-tribe of Khazraj in its own right, was considered to be the most honourable in the comity of the families of Yathrab, and Arabia, due to their relationship with Rasulullah (SAW). Khaula Bint Qais, a wife of the illustrious ‘leader of martyrs’ Hazrat Hamza bin Abdul Mutlib also belonged to Banu Najjar. Amna, mother of Rasulullah (SAW), who brought him up from the age six onwards, visited Yathrib, and stayed with Banu Najjar, her husband’s tribe. Thus, Rasulullah (SAW)’s first blessed move to Yathrib was at the age of six years. On the way back, she fell sick and died. Rasulullah (SAW) was brought back to Makkah by Umm-e-Aiman, a slave lady who had accompanied her on the journey to Yathrib.

Banu Najjar held their relationship with Rasulullah (SAW) as their hallmark and loved him dearly. It was due to this very close and strong relationship that Rasulullah (SAW) once remarked: “The best family group amongst Ansar is Banu Najjar. On another occasion he said: If I had been a part of any branch of Ansars, it would have been Banu Najjar.

## **Holy Prophet's (SAW) Prayer for Abu Ayyub Ansari**

After the migration of Rasulullah (SAW) to Madinah, Jews and Christians started their machinations and conspiracies against him. When Rasulullah (SAW) became aware of their vile intentions, he instructed the holy companions to sleep with their weapons, and some of them were posted as sentries so that any surprise move of those nefarious elements could be thwarted. One such night, Abu Ayyub Ansari acted as guard for the whole night. Rasulullah (SAW) prayed for him in these words:

*“O Abu Ayyub, may Allah protect you, as you protected his prophet”.*

It was the effect of this prayer that Hazrat Abu Ayyub was protected from hardships and untoward incidents all his life. After his demise his grave was guarded even by Christians till such time Constantinople was conquered by Muslims. Since then the government of Turkey has the responsibility of protecting his grave.

## **Distinctions & Honours**

1. He was amongst the first and foremost Companions of our beloved holy Prophet, and had embraced Islam even before the arrival of Rasulullah (SAW) in Madinah. This select group of highly revered Muslims is called “*Sabiqoon al Awwaloon*”, and has been referred to in the holy Quran as follows:



*And the first to lead the way, of the Muhajirin and the Ansar, and those who followed them in goodness - Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him, and He hath made ready for them Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the supreme triumph.*

*Surah 9 (Al-Tawba) - Verse 100*

2. He was one of the seventy five companions who undertook Oath of protecting Rasulullah (SAW) and helping him in spreading Islam even at the cost of their lives and entire possessions. It happened at a place called Uqba and was thus named as the second oath of Uqba (*Bait Uqba Thani*). It was undertaken at a time when showing even the slightest sympathy for Rasulullah (SAW) and Muslims was tantamount to jeopardizing one's life.

3. He held, and shall hold till the end of the world, the distinction and honour of being the host of Rasulullah (SAW) on his arrival in Madinah.

4. He was one of the exalted warriors who took part in the first battle the Muslims fought against infidels, i.e. the battle of Badr. These vanguards of Islam were held in the highest esteem and are known in the history as the "*Ashaab-e-Badr*".

5. Another great honour for Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari was his participation in the *Oath of Rizwan (Bait-e-*

*Rizwan*). Those who undertook this oath were given the good news of being granted a place in Paradise by Allah.

A brief narrative on this glorious event of Islamic history is necessary to highlight its position in the annals of Islamic history.

On 1st Thw al-Qídah, 06 Hijri, Rasulullah (SAW) decided to perform Haj. He departed from Madinah along with fourteen hundred companions and seventy camels for sacrifice. To ensure that the Quraish may not construe their move as aggressive, he instructed his companions not to take any weapons with them other than their swords, and even the swords should be kept in their sheaths.

After receiving and assuring Bashir bin Sufyan Khazai, the representative sent by the Quraish to ascertain the intentions of Muslims, that they had come to perform Haj only, Rasulullah (SAW) sent Hazrat Usman bin Affan RA as ambassador to Quraish, who somehow kept Hazrat Usman RA with them. The news that started circulating amongst Muslims was that he had been martyred. Rasulullah (SAW) said: "If this news is true, we will not return without avenging his murder".

Even though the companions of Rasulullah (SAW) were ill prepared for war, they wholeheartedly accepted Rasulullah (SAW)'s directive. Rasulullah (SAW) sat under a tree named "Samrah" and took an oath from all

companions that they would fight as long as they were alive and would not take a step back. All Ansars undertook the oath wholeheartedly and with great fervour. This oath is known as the *Oath of Ridwan* in Islamic history. It is also mentioned in the holy Quran as follows:

*Allah's Good Pleasure was on the Believers when they swore Fealty to thee under the Tree: He knew what was in their hearts and He sent down tranquillity to them and He rewarded them with a speedy Victory;*

*Surah 48 (Al-Fath) Verse 18*

Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari was one of those fourteen hundred illustrious souls who were conferred with the greatest honour of participating in this oath.

6. He was amongst the ten thousand victorious companions who had the good fortune of accompanying Rasulullah (SAW) at the time of the conquest of Makkah.

7. He took part in each and every battle alongwith Rasulullah (SAW).

8. In the year 10 Hijri Rasulullah (SAW) decided to perform Haj. Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari was amongst the almost One hundred thousand companions who accompanied him and took part in the last Haj performed by Rasulullah (SAW), known as *Hujjat Ul Wida*.

9. He took part in most of the battles fought for Islam. At the advanced age of eighty years he accompanied the Muslim army and reached Constantinople to conquer it, and died on the battlefield.

10. When the rebels surrounded the house of Hazrat Usman Bin Affan RA, the third caliph of Islam, and he could not come to Masjid-e-Nabwi to be the *Pesh Imam*. People approached Hazrat Ali to lead the prayers. He nominated Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari for the task. Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari thus had the honour of leading prayers in the Masjid-e-Nabwi for many days.

11. He had the honour of being the Governor of Madinah during the caliphate of Hazrat Ali Ibn-e-Abu Talib RA, who considered him his close confidante and friend.

12. He was appointed commander of the mounted troops in the battle of Nehrawan by Hazrat Ali RA, who also gave him his famous banner called "*Raita-ul-Iman*".

## **Character Qualities**

### **Unfathomable Love for Rasulullah (SAW)**

As mentioned earlier, Rasulullah (SAW) stayed in Abu Ayyub's house for almost seven months until his Masjid was completed on the open space where his camel had stopped. The blessed dwellings for himself and his family were built around the Masjid. He thus became a

neighbour of Abu Ayyub. What a noble neighbour to have!

Even after Rasulullah (SAW) had moved to his own house, Abu Ayyub Ansari kept his love for the Prophet closest to his heart and the Prophet also loved him dearly. There was no formality between them. The Prophet continued to regard Abu Ayyub Ansari's house as his own and visited him frequently. The following incident speaks volumes for the close relationship they had.

Once Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique, May Allah be pleased with him, left his house in the burning heat of the midday sun and went to the Masjid. Hazrat Umar RA (SAW) him and asked, "Abu Bakr, what has brought you out at this hour? Hazrat Abu Bakr replied that he had left his house because he was terribly hungry. At that Umar said that he had also come out for the same reason. The Prophet came up to them and asked, "What has brought the two of you out at this hour?" They told him the reason. Rasulullah (SAW) said, "By Him in Whose hands is my soul, only hunger has caused me to come out as well. Come with me."

They went to the house of Abu Ayyub Ansari. His wife opened the door and said, "Welcome to the Prophet and whoever is with him."

"Where is Abu Ayyub?" asked the Prophet. Abu Ayyub Ansari, who was working in a nearby palm grove, heard the Prophet's voice and came running.

"Welcome to the Prophet and whoever is with him," he said, and went on: "O Prophet of Allah, this is not the time when you usually come over." (Abu Ayyub Ansari used to keep some food for the Prophet every day. When the Prophet did not come for it by a certain time, Abu Ayyub used to give it to his family.) "You are right," the Prophet replied.

Abu Ayyub Ansari went out and cut a bunch of dates having some ripe and some half ripe fruit. "I did not want you to eat this," said the Prophet, referring to the unripe fruit. Could you not have brought only the ripe dates?" "O Rasulullah, please eat from both, the ripe dates (rutb) and the half ripe (busr) dates". Abu Ayyub replied. I will also slaughter an animal for you". "If you are going to, then do not kill one that gives milk," cautioned the Prophet. Abu Ayyub killed a young goat, cooked half of it and asked his wife to grill the other half, since she grilled better.

When the food was ready, it was placed before the Prophet and his two companions. The Prophet took a piece of meat and placed it in a loaf of bread and said, "Abu Ayyub, take this to Fatima. She has not tasted food like this for days".

After they had eaten, and were satisfied, the Prophet said reflectively: "Bread and meat and busr and rutb!" Tears began to flow from his eyes as he continued:

"This is a bountiful blessing about which you will be asked on the Day of Judgment. If such comes your way, put your hands to it and say, Bismillah (In the name of Allah) and when you have finished say, *"Al hamdu lillah alladhee huwa ashbana wa anama alayna"* (Praise be to Allah Who has given us enough and Who has bestowed his bounty on us). This is best."

This deep love and closeness stayed with Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari throughout his life. After the departure of Rasulullah (SAW) he used to visit his mausoleum in the Masjid-e-Nabwi to seek solace as it lessened his grief. On one such occasion, while Marwan bin Alhakm was the Governor of Madinah, Abu Ayyub Ansari visited the Roza-e-Rasool Allah and, overwhelmed by emotions, started rubbing his face on the tombstone. Incidentally Marwan bin Alhakm was also present there. He addressed him and said: "What you are doing is against Shariah (Islamic Law). Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari replied. "Marwan, I am not visiting any mound of bricks and mortar. I am meeting my beloved prophet". Such was the intensity of his love that even after the departure of Rasulullah (SAW) he kept the bond alive throughout his life.

## **Closeness to Rasulullah's (SAW) Family**

Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari had a special place of honour and sincere regard in his heart for the family members of Rasulullah (SAW). After the departure of Rasulullah (SAW) when the first Caliph was to be chosen, he openly sided with Hazrat Ali ibn-e-Abi Talib RA. The dignitaries from amongst the companions of Rasulullah (SAW) had gathered at the house of Hazrat Saad bin Abada and presented their views on who the first Caliph should be. Saad bin Abada mentioned the sacrifices and services of Ansar, and opined that an Ansar should be the Caliph. Hazrat Omar bin Khattab RA spoke and favoured Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique. Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari spoke on the qualities and services of Hazrat Ali, the killer of infidels, and recommended him to be the next Caliph. Even though the majority of those present selected Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique, yet nobody doubted the sincerity of Abu Ayyub Ansari and hence no grudges were carried forward.

Due to his sincerity and affection, family members of Rasulullah (SAW) dearly loved him and his family. He was a close friend, confidante and staunch supporter of Hazrat Ali and took part in all battles fought by Hazrat Ali. Hazrat Ali made him the Governor of Madinah and raised his stipend from 5,000 dirhams (his entitlement for being Ashab-e-Badr) to 20,000 dirhams, and increased his entitlement of slaves from 8 to 40. His



unflinching faith and trust in the family of Rasulullah (SAW) can be gauged from the fact that when some hypocrites blamed Hazrat Aisha for wrongdoing, he asked his wife Umme Ayyub if she could do what Hazrat Aisha was being blamed for. She said “By Allah, never”. He immediately replied: “If you cannot do it, how can Aisha do so when she is so much better in character and status as compared to you”.

### **Zest for Jihad**

Of all the good deeds of a Muslim, the most prized is his zest to fight in the name of Allah and lay his life, thus achieving the exalted status of a Martyr. Abu Ayyub Ansari's personality was a living embodiment of the spirit of Islam and zest for Jihad (to fight in the cause of Allah). He took part in all battles during the life of Rasulullah (SAW). Afterwards he took part in all major battles in the times of the later Caliphs. During the reign of Hazrat Umar Farooq (RA), he took part in all major battles to spread Islam in Asia and Africa, especially in the battle of Bahensa. After the conquest of Egypt, Umr Bin Aas sent an Army to conquer Africa. This Army went as far as Burqa and returned victorious thereafter. Abu Ayyub Ansari was also a part of that Army.

During the reign of Hazrat Ali, he played a prominent role in the battles of Jamal and Siffin and also held important positions in the Army of Hazrat Ali. In the

battle of Nehrwan that was fought against the Kharijites, he was appointed commander of the cavalry and Hazrat Ali gave him his famous banner called “Raita-ul-Iman”.

At the advanced age of eighty years, he travelled from Madinah to Egypt along with the troops led by Abdulrahman bin Khalid bin Walid, and from there he joined the first Muslim Army that attacked Constantinople. That proved to be his last battle in the name of Allah. He breathed his last there and was buried near the boundary wall of Constantinople.

### **Boldness in Words and Deeds**

Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari was an extremely courageous and brave person. No power, no matter how highly placed or strong, could hinder him from speaking the truth. During his stay in Egypt, Uqba bin Amir Jehni, the Governor of Egypt, was late in offering Maghrib prayers due to some reason. Abu Ayyub was also present there. He openly criticized the Governor and said “Uqba, what kind of prayer is it”? Uqba replied that he got late due to some important task. Abu Ayyub Ansari said: “That may be the case. But you should not forget that you are a companion of Rasulullah (SAW), who had directed that Maghrib prayer must be offered on time. If you, being a companion of Rasulullah (SAW) would pray late, it would give reason to the people to think that he also offered prayers late. Do not forget that no act of a

companion of Rasulullah (SAW) should be against Sunnah (the way of Rasulullah (SAW)). Uqba promised to be on time in future.

Similarly, Marwan bin Alhakm, the Governor of Madinah, solely due to his laziness, instructed the prayer leaders in the Masjid masjids to start the prayers late so that he could also join in. When Abu Ayyub Ansari came to know of it, he went to Marwan bin Alhakm and told him that he had no right to instruct delay in prayers. If he did not follow the instructions of Rasulullah (SAW) in such matters, he and his tribe will oppose him. On the other hand if he followed what the prophet did, they would support him.

Once Abdulrahman bin Khalid (bin Walid) had four prisoners of war killed with their hands and feet tied. When Abu Ayyub Ansari came to know of it, he was infuriated, and said. "This is height of callousness. Our holy prophet forbade us from resorting to such inhuman treatment towards the prisoners of war. By Allah, I don't consider it correct to slaughter even a chicken in this manner". Abdulrahman released four slaves on the spot as repentance for his mistake.

Abu Ayyub Ansari, besides being exceptionally bold, was also kind and soft hearted in the extreme. In the battle of Rome a lot of Romans were taken prisoners by Muslims. They were made to board a ship. By chance Abu Ayyub

Ansari went on the ship and became upset when he a woman crying bitterly. On inquiry she told him that her child had been separated from her and kept elsewhere on the ship. He immediately went and found her child, brought him back and handed him over to her. The in-charge of slaves became upset on seeing this interference in his area of responsibilities and complained to the chief of the army. The Chief asked Abu Ayyub why he had interfered. He replied “Rasulullah (SAW) had forbidden such acts of cruelty. You can well understand how I can remain a silent spectator to cruelty on seeing it with my own eyes”.

#### Quest for reformation

Abu Ayyub Ansari always endeavoured to reform the Muslims and rid them of acts against Sunnah. On a trip to Syria and Egypt, he saw that the toilets there were made in the direction of Qibla (the direction Muslim around the World face when praying). He was sad to see this practice. During his stay, he used to repeatedly say that Muslims must not do so as he had heard Rasulullah (SAW) say that the Muslims must not face towards or against the Qibla while using latrine. This Hadith, attributed to Abu Ayyub Ansari, became so widespread that all Muslims, child or adult, consider it a sin to use a toilet either facing or against the direction of Qibla.

#### Modesty

Abu Ayyub Ansari was modest and bashful to the extent that whenever he had an occasion to take bath outside his house, he used to make a temporary shelter of a wall of cloth all around him.

These were the lineage, character traits and personality profile of our ancestor Abu Ayyub Ansari. May Allah's blessings and mercy be with him, and may Allah bless us with the good fortune of following his example in becoming good Muslims. Ameen!

## ABU AYYUB ANSARI THE PERPETUAL SCHOLAR

### **Quran in Heart, by Heart**

Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari was one of those few distinguished companions who had memorized the Quran in the life of Rasulullah (SAW). Allama Damairi, in his authentic treatise “*Hayatul Insaan*”, has mentioned his name as one of those who had achieved this milestone. Muhammad bin Kaab Qarzi, another prominent historian and chronicler, stated that only five companions of Rasulullah (SAW) had done so. Abu Ayyub Ansari was one of them. As per other writings, a number of other companions have also been named. However, the name of Hazrat Ayyub Ansari is included in every list and as such his holding of this sterling qualification is undisputed and definite.

### **Position as a Scholar**

Abu Ayyub Ansari was an ocean of knowledge and the entire population of Madinah acknowledged his superiority in this field. He was considered to be the source for consultation by those who sought answers. Prominent scholars looked for his opinion and advice. He was regularly consulted on controversial matters and he resolved them most satisfactorily. Honourable companions of Rasulullah (SAW) who consulted him

included, among others, Abdullah bin Abbas, Abdullah bin Umar, Anas bin Malik, Baraa bin Azib, Abu Amama Bahili, Zaid bin Khalid Jehni, Abdullah bin Yazeed Khatni, Miqdam bin Madekarb and Jaabir bin Samrah. Other prominent personalities of the era who consulted him were Urwah bin Zubair, Saeed bin Mussaib, Salim bin Abdullah, Ata bin Yasar, Ata bin Yazeed Laisi, Abu Salmah and Abdurrahman bin Abi Laila.

In spite of his grasp of knowledge, he did not harbour vanity or pride and always preferred to consult other scholars of his time as well. An example of his respect for other revered scholars will illustrate his approach further.

Asif bin Sufyan Saqfi could not participate in the Battle of Salasil. This non-participation had nothing to do with his intent. He had left home for the battlefield but while on his way, he received news that the battle was over. He was deeply pained to have missed the opportunity to take part in it. He went to Ameer Muawiyah in a state of despair and grief. Abu Ayyub Ansari and Uqba bin Amir Jehni were also present there. All three were exalted companions of Rasulullah (SAW) as well as acknowledged scholars of that era. Asim addressed Abu Ayyub Ansari directly and sought his ruling on whether he had benefitted from participating in the battle due to his intent or had he missed the opportunity, ignoring the other two scholars. Abu Ayyub Ansari answered the

query but did not like the way Asim had ignored the other two. Therefore, he turned towards them and asked: “Uqba, did I answer correctly?” Uqba confirmed that the answer was correct in his opinion as well.

This incident amply reflects upon Abu Ayyub Ansari’s depth of knowledge as well as his humility and regard for other scholars of his era.

### **Passion for Hadith**

Abu Ayyub Ansari was very fond of listening to Ahadith (sayings of Rasulullah (SAW)). He came to know that Uqbah bin Amir, who was the Head of Taxes in Egypt, was the narrator of a particular hadith. Abu Ayyub had not heard that hadith. He was so overwhelmed by the desire to listen to it directly from the narrator that in spite of his advanced age he undertook the long and difficult journey from Madinah to Egypt. On reaching Egypt he first went to the house of Masalamah bin Mukhlid, who was most pleased to meet the host of Rasulullah (SAW). He asked Abu Ayyub the purpose of his visit to Egypt. Abu Ayyub replied that he had come to listen to the hadith that Uqba was the narrator of, as there was nobody else amongst Muslims who knew it. He then asked for the address of Uqbah. On reaching Uqbah’s house, he asked him to narrate the hadith. When Uqbah had finished the narration, Abu Ayyub thanked him and departed for Madinah.



There is a difference of opinion amongst historians whether this particular hadith was with Uqbah or Masalamah bin Mukhlid Ansari. However, all historians agree that the hadith was as follows:

Rasulullah (SAW) said: “And whoever covers a Muslim (by not uncovering his/her sins) Allah will cover him/her in this world and the Hereafter.”

### **Propagation of Hadith**

Abu Ayyub Ansari was keen and vigorous in the propagation of Hadith so that Muslims could live their lives in accordance with the teachings of Rasulullah (SAW). He used to teach Hadith with great fervour, and if he saw someone indulging in an act contrary to the Ahadith, he admonished him and recited the hadith that forbade Muslims from doing so. A few incidents of his boldness and zeal in exhorting people to lead their lives in accordance with the Sunnah have been presented earlier. His zest for the propagation of hadith was such that he was busy in doing so even till the end. On his death bed, he narrated a hadith that was hitherto unknown to most of the companions of Rasulullah (SAW) and other illustrious scholars. He narrated: “Rasulullah (SAW) said that even if you people did not commit sins, Allah would have created another nation who would have committed sins so that He would forgive them”.

## **Ahadith attributed to Abu Ayyub Ansari**

One hundred and fifty Ahadith are attributed to Abu Ayyub Ansari. He is thus included in the twenty six companions of Rasulullah (SAW) who have over one hundred but less than five hundred Ahadith attributed to them.

Rasulullah (SAW) said: “He who observed all fasts during Ramadan and then, after Eid-ul-Fitr, fasted for six days in the month of Shawal; it is as if he observed fasts for the whole year.

Rasulullah (SAW) said: “Muslims must not face towards or against Qibla while using the toilet. They should face sideways.

Rasulullah (SAW) said: “To struggle for Jihad (fighting in the name of Allah) is better than anything on which the sun either rises or sets (meaning thereby Jihad is better than anything else in the World).

A person asked Rasulullah (SAW): “O Messenger of Allah, tell me an act that would take me to paradise and save me from the hellfire. Rasulullah (SAW) said: “The deed which can draw you nearer to Paradise and take you away from Hell is: Worship only Allah, do not associate anybody with him, establish prayers (Salat) without default, pay Zakat and do good to your kin.

Rasulullah (SAW) said:” It is forbidden for Muslims to turn their faces away from each other for three days continuously such that when they meet, both turn their faces. The better of the two is one who offers greetings (Salam) to the other first.

Rasulullah (SAW) said: “The man who did not attribute a partner to Allah will go to paradise after his death.

Rasulullah (SAW), when he ate or drank something, said: “All praise for Allah who gave to eat and drink, and who passed them through the throat easily and gave the way to take it out”.

Rasulullah (SAW) said: Four acts are the Sunnah of prophets. First is modesty, (as an expression of bashfulness) second is using perfume, third is using Miswak (branch of a tree used for brushing teeth, and fourth is entering in to Nikah (getting married).

Rasulullah (SAW) said: “A person who worships Allah, does not associate anyone with him, prays properly, pays zakat and saves himself from the major sins, he will definitely, and most definitely, go to paradise”. The people asked: “O Prophet of Allah, what are the major sins”? He replied: “Associating someone with Allah, running away from Jihad and killing an innocent. All of them are major sins”.

10. Rasulallah (SAW) said: “It is a must to say ‘Bismillah’ prior to eating anything as it will bring ‘barakah’ (blessings) to it otherwise there will be no ‘barakah’.

11. A person came to Rasulallah (SAW) and asked him to render a brief advice to him. Rasulallah (SAW) said: “When you stand for prayer, pray like a person who is going to bid farewell to everybody and leave the World. The second advice to remember is not to utter anything from your tongue that would render you liable to regret or accountability tomorrow. The third thing to remember is that what looks like with people and in their hands, lose hope from it totally (meaning thereby that the focus of your hopes should only be Allah and do not hope for anything from people)”.

12. Rasulallah (SAW) said: “My followers will always be on the right path as long as they do not delay Maghrib prayers till such time that the stars appear thick (a lot of them close to each other) on the sky”.

As descendants of such an illustrious scholar, we must strive to attain as much knowledge as we can. Surely it is the only wealth that cannot be stolen. It will enrich us and our generations. It will save us from the evils of excessive wealth, give us respect in this World and if the knowledge attained is of the right kind, it will help us to be forgiven by Allah and to be rewarded with Paradise.

## THE RELENTLESS WARRIOR FINALLY RESTS

Being a scion of Banu Najjar, a branch of the Khazraj tribe, Abu Ayyub Ansari was well versed in warfare as Khazraj was one of the dominant tribes of Madinah and wars in the tribal society of that era were frequent. Almost all able bodied male members took part in the battles and feuds that were fought and bravery was considered a pre-requisite for them.

However, what distinguished Abu Ayyub Ansari from others was his passion and longing to take part in as many battles fought in the name of Allah as he could, and attain the coveted position of a Shaheed (Martyr). Much of his life was spent as a warrior waging Jihad for the cause of Islam and it was said of him: "He did not stay away from any battle the Muslims fought from the time of the Prophet to the time of Muawiyah unless he was engaged at the same time in another."

His zeal stemmed from what Quran said about Jihad in 41 verses and what Rasulullah (SAW) said in 56 Ahadith. Being a scholar, he knew by heart Ayahs and Ahadith such as follows:

*'Let those (believers) who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter fight in the cause of Allah., and whosoever*

*fights in the Cause of Allah, and is killed or is victorious,  
 We shall bestow on him a great reward.'*  
 Surah 4- (An-Nisa) Verse 74

*Rasulullah (SAW) said, "A single endeavour (of fighting)  
 in Allah's Cause in the forenoon or in the afternoon is  
 better than the world and whatever is in it." (Sahih  
 Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 52, Number 50)*

He was fully cognizant of the purpose of Jihad. Jihad was not a tool for either state expansion or collection of worldly riches. Islam had made it an act of worship as it was to be used for self-defence and to free the oppressed from the oppressor.

There was no doubt in the mind of Abu Ayyub that the greatest achievement, the most glorious victory for a Muslim, was to fight in the name of Allah and lay his life. He was asked by those who (SAW) him in the front rank of every battle: "Why have you dedicated yourself to Jihad"? His answer was "After I had read in the Holy Quran the divine edict, 'Do not refrain from Jihad in any situation,' it was not possible for me to abandon it."

Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Khyber, Nehrwan, Siffin, where ever the call for Jihad was given, he was amongst the first to join. When a campaign was to start at dawn, he woke up first. If it was required to stand to the Prophet's tent, Abu Ayyub was there for it. What to talk of the shadow of a sword falling on Rasulullah (SAW), he could not

even withstand a bird's feather in Rasulullah's (SAW) beard. With his own hands, he removed the feather from Rasulullah's (SAW) face between Safa and Marwa, and was rewarded with the prayer "*O Abu Ayyub, from now on no evil will touch you.*" This prayer cloaked Abu Ayyub in such an invincible coat of armour that he remained unscathed in each and every battle he fought, and he fought innumerable. We, the descendants of Abu Ayyub Ansari have a firm faith and belief that the prayer of Rasulullah (SAW) protects us even today, provided we steadfastly follow the right path as shown by him, and thus become his true followers.

He did not hang his sword after Rasulullah's (SAW) departure. The Host of the Last Messenger of Allah (SAW) sought new battlefields in Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Cyprus during the times of Abu Bakr, Omar, Uthman, Ali and others who followed.

### **Significance of The Battle for Qastuntuniya**

However, participation in the battle for Constantinople was something special. It was a coveted dream of every Muslim due to a number of predictions by Rasulullah (SAW). Brief narration of those is as follows:

One day, Rasulullah (SAW) was resting after lunch at the home of his maternal aunt, Umme Haraam bint Milhan. Suddenly, he opened his eyes and smiled. She asked the reason for his smile. He replied: "In my dream I was

shown a few from amongst my people who were sailing on a ship. They exuded regal grace and were busy in Jihad. She requested him to pray for her to be included in that august group. He prayed accordingly, and went to sleep again. When he woke up, she asked him if she had been included in that group. He replied in affirmative. Umme Haraam narrated that at that time Rasulullah (SAW) said: "The first army from amongst my people who will wage Jihad using Navy will be destined for paradise". Another hadith is that Rasulullah (SAW) said the following on that occasion: "The first army from my Ummah that wages Jihad on Constantinople will be forgiven by Allah for all their sins".

As per another saying, Rasulullah (SAW) predicted the following on another occasion: "Constantinople will be conquered. And how good would the chief be and how good would that army be that conquers it".

It was due to these sayings of Rasulullah (SAW) that his companions and other Muslims were highly desirous of taking part in the conquest of Constantinople. Providence offered that opportunity during the period of Hazrat Uthman bin Affan, and thereafter during the period of Amir Muawiyah. During his time, Kaiser of Rome had started unnecessary mischief against the Muslims. He sent a gigantic fleet comprising of five hundred ships to attack the coast of Syria. Amir of Syria, after seeking approval from the caliph, organized an



Islamic fleet under Abdullah bin Abi Sarah to retaliate. A fierce battle took place between the two. Roman fleet could not face the Islamic onslaught and was defeated.

Thereafter, in 27 or 28 Hijri, Amir Muawiyah sent a strong naval fleet to attack Cyprus. Amongst the troops were the famous companion of Rasulullah (SAW) Abada bin Samit and his wife Umme Haraam bint Milhan. Allah bestowed victory upon Muslims. Islamic flag was raised at Cyprus. On return, Umme Haraam fell from the horse, was grievously hurt and died as a result. She was buried in Cyprus. According to a few historians this was the fleet Rasulullah (SAW) had mentioned about. However, majority of the historians are unanimous in their opinion that the prophecy of Rasulullah (SAW) referred to the Islamic Army that attacked Constantinople the first time. Abu Ayyub Ansari was a part of that army. Here, it would be appropriate to narrate that battle as Abu Ayyub Ansari played a major role in that important chapter of Islamic history.

Constantinople, whose current name is Istanbul, is an important city and port in North West Turkey, situated on both sides of the Bosphorus. Built by Constantine I on the site of ancient Byzantium in 476 CE, it was the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, and later on, of the Ottoman Empire. At that time it was called Constantinople. Amir Muawiyah sent an army to conquer Constantinople in one of the years from 48 to 52

Hijri. This bracket is being used as there is difference of opinion amongst the historians on the exact year of attack. As per some historians, the Muslim army was led by Sufyan bin Auf. However, majority of them opine that Yazid bin Muawiyah was the leader of the expedition. Yazid is the most despicable and hated character of Islamic history. Whether he deserved to lead such an important military mission is beyond the scope of this book. However, historians noted that Abu Ayyub Ansari's passion for Jihad was so strong that he did not even hesitate to fight under him. To him it was his own intent that warranted merit. He was aware of the significance of his presence in the Army that would lay the siege at Constantinople, and nothing could prevent him from joining it. According to authentic historical data he was not the only senior companion of Rasulullah (SAW) who was a part of that army. Other luminaries such as Abdullah bin Abbas, Abdullah bin Umar and Abdullah bin Zubair were also accompanying him.

Muslim army was divided in to two forces. One force consisted of volunteers from Egypt and other comprised of those from Syria. Each force was under command of one of the two distinguished Generals, Fazalah bin Obaid and Abdurrahman bin Khalid bin Waleed. According to one record, Abu Ayyub was in the force being led by Abdurrahman bin Khalid. He was eighty years old at that time. However, his passion for Jihad was so strong that

he undertook the long and arduous journey from Madinah to Syria solely to take part in the battle. He chose to fight as a common soldier even though nobody in that army matched his position in any respect. Being one of the Ashab-e-Badr and Ashab-e-Shijra he was a full moon that illuminated the entire Islamic territories of that period. His presence was a blessing for the troops and was a major source of high morale of the troops. Professor Philip K. Hitti, in his globally acknowledged "History of the Arabs" says the following about him (Pages 201 & 202).

*"In legend Yazid distinguished himself for bravery and fortitude below the walls of Constantinople and earned the title fate al-'Arab (the young champion or hero of the Arabs). The Aghani<sup>5</sup> relates that alternate shouts of jubilation were heard from two separate tents as the Arabs or the Byzantines made headway in the battle. On learning that one tent was occupied by the daughter of the king of the Rum and the other by the daughter of Jabalah ibn-al-Ayham, Yazid was spurred to extraordinary activity in order to seize the Ghassanid king's daughter. But the real legendary hero of the campaign was the aged Abu-Ayyub al-Ansari, the standard-bearer of the Prophet, who had harboured Muhammad in al-Madinah on the occasion of the Hijrat and whose presence in Yazid's contingent was desired more for the blessing it might bring than for its military*

*value. In the course of the siege Abu-Ayyub died of dysentery and was buried before the walls of Constantinople. His tomb soon became a shrine even for the Christian Greeks, who made pilgrimages to it in time of drought to pray for rain<sup>1</sup>. During the siege of Constantinople in 1453 by the Turks, the tomb was miraculously discovered by rays of light—an episode comparable to the discovery of the holy lance at Antioch by the early Crusaders—and a Masjid was built on the site. Thus did the Madinese gentleman become a saint for three nations”.*

Amir Muawiyah provided the armament required for success, and one day this fleet sailed on its historic voyage. Roman King Constantine the 4<sup>th</sup>, on getting news of Muslim fleet, also started preparations in full steam. In a few days a force of thousands of Roman troops equipped with the required weaponry collected under his banner. Islamic fleet, crossing the Aegean Sea, sailed through the Sea of Marmara and landed at a suitable place outside Constantinople.



The Roman army, without wasting any time, launched a major attack on Muslim forces. Muslims fought back. The ferocity of the Muslim attack was such that they used to routinely penetrate through the Roman ranks knowing fully well that they would be cut off from the main body of their army and would definitely be killed. Yet, the dream of martyrdom was more powerful than the desire for life. On one such occasion, a fighter, named Abdulaziz bin Zararah in some chronicles, penetrated through the ranks of Romans alone. A few Muslims, seeing the fearless act, recited a verse from Quran:

*“and do not throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction [by refraining].*

*Surah 2 (Al-Baqara) Verse 195*

At that point Abu Ayyub Ansari came forward and addressed the Muslim army. He said: “O Muslims; is this

what you perceive the meaning of this Surah to be? In fact the real meanings are just the opposite. When it was peace, the Ansars had intended to cover up the losses they had suffered in their businesses during various battles they had fought in the name of Allah. At that time this Surah was revealed, explaining that there is no loss of materials and life in Jihad. In fact refraining from Jihad is tantamount to putting one's life in fatal jeopardy".

Aslam Abu Imran narrates: "We left Madinah for Constantinople for Jihad. Abdurrahman bin Khalid bin Waleed was the commander of our force. The Romans, having faced tremendous pressure from our troops, had been pushed back to the defensive wall of Constantinople. One of our valiant soldiers attacked and penetrated the Romans ranks. Others around tried to stop him by saying that he was putting his life in jeopardy and would definitely be killed. At that time Abu Ayyub Ansari intervened and explained that the particular verse of Surah Baqarah being referred to was revealed for Ansars. When the beloved Prophet (SAW) achieved victory over the enemies of Islam, a thought came to our minds to spend the peace that followed in protecting our wealth. At that time Allah revealed that verse ordering us to spend in the name of Allah and not to put ourselves in fatal jeopardy. Fatal jeopardy was referred to the act of protecting wealth and leaving Jihad.

Abu Imran further narrates: "Abu Ayyub always remained busy in Jihad till such time he died and was buried in Constantinople".

The Romans suffered heavy losses due to the valour of the Muslim troops and withdrew to the city. Thereafter, they closed the doors and became fortified. Muslim army laid siege and started preparations to make a suitable breach.

### **Death and Last Will**

While the Muslim army had laid siege of Constantinople, Europe's climate was taking its toll of the health of Muslim troops. A large number of them fell sick. Abu Ayyub was one of them. When there was no hope left for his survival, the Commander of the troops, Yazid bin Muawiyah, came to him and said: "Do you have a will, Abu Ayyub?" He replied: "Convey my Salam to the Muslim army and say to them: "If a Muslim dies in a state that he does not share any of Allah's noble attributes with anyone else, he will be rewarded with paradise. Abu Ayyub urges you to penetrate deeply into the enemy territory as far as you can go, and that you should carry him with you and that you should bury him under your feet next to the walls of Constantinople". Thereafter, he breathed his last. They pushed back enemy's forces in attack after attack until they

reached the walls of Constantinople. There they buried him. His death was mourned greatly. The Commander led the prayers and then the entire force took part in the burial, which took place at night. As per his Will, his grave was levelled so that Romans would not discover it.

When the Roman King Constantine IV was informed of the activity of Muslim troops at night, he sent his messenger to inquire about the matter. Muslims were used to saying the truth. They told the messenger that a companion of Rasulullah (SAW) had died and had been buried. Constantine IV sent the message to the Muslim Army that as soon as the Muslims left, he would have the grave dug and throw out his bones. The Muslims were infuriated on receiving this heinous message. Yazid sent the reply: "If you do so, be it known that by Allah we will dig every Christian grave in the vast Muslim empire and destroy all churches".

The threat had the desired effect on the Roman king. He replied in the following words: I swear by the Virgin Mary to respect and protect the grave of the companion of your Prophet. The historians chronicle that Romans kept their word and in one of the writings it is even said that the King himself had a dome constructed on the grave.

After the demise of Abu Ayyub Ansari, Muslim Army lifted the siege of Constantinople and returned. The



Muslims besieged the city for four years but eventually had to withdraw after suffering heavy losses.

After this first knock on Constantinople's door by the standard bearer of Rasulullah (SAW), the honour of its ultimate conquest was destined for Sultan Muhammad the Conqueror some eight hundred years later.

Conquest of Constantinople by Sultan Muhammad the Conqueror is a glorious chapter of Islamic history. However, since it falls beyond the purview of this book, we shall move on to the discovery of the grave of Abu Ayyub Ansari.

### **Delivery of Banner**

Several hundred years before Sultan Muhammad conquered Istanbul, the tomb of Abu Ayyub Ansari was known to the Romans. As a matter of fact, during famine and drought, the Byzantines used to visit his tomb and pray there. However, with the passage of time and vagaries of weather its location had become unknown and all signs leading to it were obliterated.

So, where was his grave?

Abu Ayyub's grave could not have been destroyed as Rasulullah (SAW) had prayed for his protection, saying:

*“O Abu Ayyub, may Allah protect you, as you protected his prophet”.*”

*“O Abu Ayyub, from now on no evil will touch you.”*

Sultan Muhammad, who had earned the praise of Rasulullah (SAW) by having conquered Istanbul, was well aware of the fact that the spiritual dimension of the Conquest would be incomplete without finding Abu Ayyub Ansari as it was he who had carried the Banner of Islam during the Conquest of Mecca, the gate of Islam leading to the Arabian Peninsula, and then had taken the same banner and delivered it as far as the city-walls of Istanbul, the Gate of Islam leading to the whole world.

In accordance with a sign from Rasulullah (SAW) he had wished to be buried at a place as close as possible to the city-walls, for he would wait there to deliver the Banner to the blessed commander who would conquer Istanbul; from there, he would continue to illuminate their way through the light he had inherited from Rasulullah (SAW) and pray for them so that they could spread Islam all over the world. A saying of Rasulullah (SAW) in this regard is:

*“On doomsday, each of my companions will be resurrected as the leader of, and the light for, the people of the land where they died.”*

Being aware of the importance of the conquest of Constantinople for Muslims, Sultan Muhammad had requested for help from Aqa Shamsuddin, a saint, who was also his *Murshid*. Aqa Shamsuddin (whose real name was Muhammad bin Hamza) prayed for the victory and also accompanied him to the battlefield. After Constantinople was conquered, Sultan Muhammad spent three sleepless nights as he could not find the grave of Abu Ayyub Ansari. He wished to be entrusted with the spiritual banner that had been brought there by Abu Ayyub. He wanted to be his host forever and benefit from his blessings. The defensive boundary wall of the city was many miles long, and it was not possible to have it dug all along. Thus he requested his *Murshid* Aqa Shamsuddin to help him in finding the grave of Abu Ayyub Ansari.

Aqa Shamsuddin mentioned that he had seen a beam of luminescence from earth to the sky at a place outside the protective wall of the city. That could possibly be the site of Abu Ayyub's grave. Thereafter, he went to that spot and sat in meditation for a long time. Thereafter, he lifted his head and said: "Allah bestowed upon me the honour of meeting the soul of Abu Ayyub Ansari. Abu Ayyub has congratulated all Muslims for the great and historic victory and said that Allah has accepted your effort to remove all signs of Infidelity and *Shirk* from the vicinity of my grave".

Sultan Muhammad humbly asked his Murshid to grant him the good fortune of seeing a sign of the same so that his heart could be at peace. The great saint started his meditation again. He lifted his head after a while and, pointing to a place, said: "Dig at this spot. It is the place where the grave of Abu Ayyub Ansari is hidden".

Sultan ordered the digging to commence immediately. After a few feet of excavation a white tombstone was discovered. A few Hebrew words were inscribed on it. Those who knew Hebrew translated it. It stated "This is the grave of Abu Ayyub Ansari". This stone is still affixed to the wall next to his grave.

The victorious Sultan Muhammad, who was only twenty three years old at that time, was overjoyed on seeing the grave of the exalted companion of Rasulullah (SAW) , and fell in *sajda* right on the spot. Later, he had a grand tomb built on the grave and ordered a huge Masjid to be constructed there. When the Masjid was completed, he went with all the notables of his kingdom and offered prayers there. After the prayers, Aqa Shamsuddin placed a sword in his hands and prayed for his betterment. Thereafter, it became a tradition that continued for a few centuries. Whoever became sultan of the Turkish Empire first presented himself at the Masjid of Abu Ayyub Ansari and wore the sword presented by Aqa Shamsuddin. It was only after this that his formal ascension was announced. This ceremony became the

equivalent of the coronation of Turkish Sultans. When Kamal Atatürk ended kingship and converted Turkey into a democratic republic, it was discontinued.

### **The Mausoleum Complex of Abu Ayyub Ansari**

Constantinople (Istanbul today) has remained the centre of Islamic civilization and culture for centuries. Even though the capital of Turkey has been moved to Ankara, the importance and prominence of Istanbul has not been lessened at all as it is the last resting place of Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari RA. The grand and picturesque natural harbour of Istanbul, Golden Horn, is also located on the mouth of a gulf popularly named after him. The district where his Mausoleum is located is on the left bank of the Golden Horn. The Mausoleum Complex exudes grandeur. It consists of the tomb, a huge Masjid with many artefacts from Islamic history including a standard said to have been carried by Abu Ayyub Ansari in so many battles, and a graveyard. Most of the prominent figures of the Turkish history are buried there as it was considered to be a matter of great honour to be the neighbour of Abu Ayyub in death, who was a host and neighbour of Rasulullah (SAW).

And thus, there in Istanbul, lies in rest till the day of resurrection, the relentless warrior of Allah, the brightest star of Khazraj, the full moon of Banu Najjar, the host and companion of Rasulullah (SAW), the standard

bearer of Islam, the chronicler and interpreter of one hundred and fifty five Ahadith of Rasulullah (SAW), the admonisher sans fear, the bold defender of the traditions of Rasulullah (SAW), and our ancestor, Aba Ayyub Ansari. May Allah and Allah's last messenger's blessings and prayers be always with him!!

10  
MAZAR-E-ABA AYYUB  
A VISIT TO REMEMBER

The Plane took off from Lester B. Pearson Airport, Toronto, for Istanbul. I was on my way to present my humblest *Salam* to Aba Ayyub, our ancestor. The excitement of the trip was there, yet the fear of a lowly sinner presenting himself to the King of Ansars, and in Turkey they literally call him Sultan, meaning a king, was over-whelming. What will I say? How will I explain a life wasted in worldly pursuits? Why did I not become someone he could approve of? Would he be very disappointed? He was the host of Rasulullah (SAW), his standard bearer, a scholar who had Quran in his heart and he knew it by heart. He spent his life fighting the enemies of Islam, I spent my life not even following the path that Allah, Rasulullah (SAW) and his companions like my Aba showed to us through their words and deeds. And now this errant sinner was mustering the courage to face his ancestor and submit his tears of repentance, his regret, his remorse. Would they be accepted? Would he be generous as a Sultan, forgiving as a father, or would I return rebuked and condemned?

As the plane took off, so did my imagination. Between sleep and slumber, being there and not being there, I lived through the entire history of my people. The

aircraft flew at an altitude of 10,000 meters, my imagination soared even higher. I lived the lives my ancestors had lived some four thousand years ago. Born in one of the tribes of Mustarabah, from the generation of Hazrat Ismail bin Ibrahim (RA) and his son Nabit bin Ismail, who lived in the northern parts of Arabia, I migrated as a part of a branch called Azd and settled in Yemen, then moved to Yathrib and became a member of the tribe of Banu Khazraj. I was an Idol worshipper then.

After over a century of fighting with Banu Aus, the tribe of Khazraj's brother, I became a Muslim, primarily through the efforts of Musab bin Umair (RA), who was the first Muslim Ansari. Not only did I embrace Islam, I became part of a group comprising of the most dedicated supporters and diehard defenders of Mohammed Rasulullah (SAW) and Islam. My Chief, who led me through those exhilarating, yet trying times, was Khalid, son of Zaid, son of Kulaib, son of Saalbah, son of Abd-e-Auf Khazraji, of Banu Najjar, a branch of the Khazraj tribe of Ansars, and known to the World as Abu Ayyub Ansari.

And I was going to meet my Aba Ayyub in Istanbul, some fourteen hundred years after he had laid his life in the name of Allah, and Islam. What a day!!

The plane landed at the Ataturk International Airport. I went through immigration, and applied for visa to get



out of the airport and visit the Mazar of Abu Ayyub Ansari. The Canadian passport may have helped, but my confidence stemmed from the call I felt I had received from my Aba Ayyub. The visa was issued, and I found myself standing in front of the Turkish tourism counter to seek directions and advice on the visit. As I mentioned to the young guide my intent, he looked a little concerned and informed me that the Eyup Sultan (that is what they call the Mazar of Abu Ayyub Ansari in Turkey) was under renovation. He then said something that left me speechless. With his limited grasp of English, he said: “But even the air there is enough”. I was stunned at the coincidence of that young man using the same word ‘air’ as Allama Iqbal, the great poet of the East, had used the same word in capturing the environment of the Mausoleum of Abu Ayyub Ansari so appropriately:

*Nikhat-e-Gul Kee Tarah Pakeezah Hai Uss Kee Hawa  
Turbat-e-Ayyub Ansari sey Aati Hai Sada  
Ai Musalman Millat-e-Islam Ka Dil Hai Yeh Shehr  
Sainkron Sadiyon Key Kusht O Khoon Ka Hasil Hai Yeh  
Shehr*

Translation:

*Its air is as pure as fragrance of a flower  
A voice emerges from the grave of Abu Ayyub  
O Muslim, this city is heart of the Muslim nation  
And result of millenniums of effort and blood.*

That set the visit on sound footing. I rented a car. The driver displayed traditional goodwill of Turks towards Muslims of Indian and Pakistani descent due to the Medical Mission lead by Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari that had visited Turkey to treat the injured of Balkan War, another bright star of our family who will be covered in detail later. He dropped me at the junction of the main and side roads leading to the complex and promised to return and pick me up after Maghrib prayers.

As I walked in to the complex, I first went to the Masjid and offered two Rakat Nawafil *Qudoom-e-Masjid* (literally meaning for setting foot in the Masjid), and then moved toward the Mazar. I stood next to the tree that is said to be there from times immemorial providing shade to those who pass by. The Mazar was under renovation, yet open for people to visit and pray. I walked, head bowed, much like a repentant son goes to his father. The Mazar was crowded as visiting devotees continued to pour in. I stood in a corner and offered Fateha. Tears streaming down, I poured out my heart.

Aba, (the word means father in Arabic) I have come. I am crushed with the guilt that I have let you down badly. I am ashamed to show you my face. But show my face I must. To ensure that our children do not have to face the dilemma I face today, I have decided to write a book about you and about those of your children who did you proud. I will, Insha Allah, do what I can to pass on that script to all of our family so that they make it a must read for their children. Once they know their heritage, and the mountains of character, piety and strength that have always been there to protect and guide them, they will do better. They will become better Muslims, and will be proud to be Ansaris.

“Please pray to Allah that I succeed in this mission. Nobody in our family is closer to Him and his last Messenger than you. I beg for your supplication and blessings in this matter”.

The next few hours were spent in a trance. I was not in my senses to take notes about the Mausoleum Complex, or even record my feelings. I had to seek help from what has been written by other visitors before me. Thus a lot of credit goes to those devotees who have visited my Aba Ayyub, written about the experience and have made it available on the free domain.

## **History**

The Eyup Sultan Masjid Complex is situated outside the Walls of Istanbul, on the southern reaches of Golden Horn, in the District of Eyup on the European side of Istanbul. Built in 1458 by Sultan Muhammad Fateh (the conqueror), it was the first Masjid constructed after conquest of Constantinople in 1453.

The original Masjid was destroyed in an earthquake and the present structure was constructed in its place in 1800 CE. On Fridays, throngs of the faithful visit the mausoleum. Old trees, flocks of pigeons, praying believers and the visiting crowds create a mystical and colourful atmosphere all around. The walls in the courtyard are covered with tiles from different periods, and present a mosaic of the changing times.

### **Significance**

Abu Ayyub Ansari still beckons thousands of people. Farmers from Anatolia, businessmen, statesmen, intellectuals, students, women from the countryside in their colourful local dress and foreigners, all come to pay their respect, to recite verses of the Quran, to ask for the Creator's blessing or simply to breathe the spiritually rich air radiating from area. For Muslims who come to visit İstanbul for whatever reason, Eyup Sultan is a must to visit.

The number of visitors to the Masjid and the tomb increases significantly during religious holidays, Friday

prayers and the holy month of Ramadan in particular. Streets become over crowded due to traffic, but despite having to wait for hours, they keep on coming. For many people, praying Sunday's Fajr prayers at this Masjid has become a tradition, and the Masjid is filled to capacity on the occasion, with rows of the faithful spilling into the streets around it.

Some of the personal belongings of Rasulullah (SAW) are preserved in the Masjid as well. His other belongings are preserved in the Topkapi Palace and in several other Masjids of İstanbul, which was the final seat of the Islamic Caliphate.

It is also a common tradition among newlyweds to visit the tomb as well as the Masjid and for families to bring their sons to celebrate their circumcision. Thus Eyup Sultan shares the joys and religious fervour of the people all year round.

### **Architecture and Design**

The Masjid has a rectangular design with a Mehrab (an arch in the front wall indicating the direction of prayer). The central dome rests on six columns and is supported by arches based on two piers. According to historical sources, the Masjid has undergone several renovations since 1458. There are galleries surrounding three sides of the Masjid. The Mehrab is vaulted and the pulpit is made

of marble. The seven domes of the Masjid's portico stand on six columns.

The Masjid as we see today is the second built on site by Sultan Salim III in 1723. It has a main dome of 17.50 meters in diameter and two minarets, built rather high according to the standards of that era. The interior of the Masjid is plainly decorated, differentiating it from other Masjids of the period, although the gilding decorating the Masjid niche is eye-catching.

Another feature of the Eyup Sultan Complex is that for hundreds of years people of prominence have willed to be buried near the tomb of Abu Ayyub Ansari. As a result, the complex is now surrounded by graves and tombs. Today, Eyup graveyard is one of the largest in İstanbul; however, it is difficult to find a plot there as almost every pious Muslim would like to be buried there in the hope of being raised on the Day of Judgment together with the Prophet's companion, Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari.

Following their ascent to the throne, Ottoman sultans girded their sword in the vicinity of Eyup Sultan Masjid. The tradition is said to date back even to Byzantine times, when new rulers of the city did the same to signify their standing.

The outer courtyard of the Eyup Sultan Masjid has two gates opening to the street. The inner courtyard has 13

domes based on 12 columns. The main round-shaped fountain is located at the centre of the inner courtyard. Marble gateway to the inner courtyard holds nine lines of inscription.

### **The Mazar**

The tomb has always been a centre of attraction, drawing a variety of people, including Ottoman sultans, throughout its history. Today, it remains the district's nucleus and holds a special place in peoples' hearts.

The outer and inner walls of the tomb are adorned with tiles. The single-domed tomb has an octagonal shape. That part of the tomb housing Abu Ayyub al-Ansari's sarcophagus, enclosed in silver with beautifully adorned railings, is separated from the rest of the hall. The velvet curtains at the tomb are said to have been originally made for the Mazar of Rasulullah (SAW), known in Turkey as Rawdatul Mutahhara (Dome of the Prophet); nevertheless the curtains could not be sent there due to the outbreak of World War I and were hung in Abu Ayyub Ansari's tomb instead.

The mausoleum hall and the tomb chamber have been adorned with calligraphy, crystal chandeliers and silver decorations from different centuries. Furthermore, a footprint of the Prophet Mohammed in marble stone

and framed in silver lies embedded in the wall that faces the direction of prayer.

Each generation of rulers, and countless individual sponsors, have left no effort to adorn and beautify the mausoleum. Calligraphies, crystal chandeliers and silver decorations from different centuries cover the mausoleum's hall and the radiant tomb chamber.

### **The Surroundings**

From the Masjid, framed on both sides by centuries-old graves of Ottoman family members and state officials, towards the landing place of the ferryboats crossing the Golden Horn, leads a stately road, which for a long time in history witnessed the "dressing-of-the-sword" ceremonies marking ascension of a new sultan.

On one side of the road, tucked away inside a green garden full of trees and flowers, lie the premises of a traditional soup kitchen belonging to the Waqf, the endowment of the Masjid. Here, since the days of Sultan Muhammad the conqueror, free food for the poor and needy, the widows, elderly and orphans is cooked in enormous steaming kettles and huge stew pots.

On the opposite side of the Masjid, beyond the outer courtyard with its hamam, the round, roofed place for ritual ablutions, a spacious, newly outlaid square has been built, paved with traditional cobblestone, offering an invigorating fountain at its centre and plenty of



benches to sit on and relax. From a small side street of souvenir shops, one can hear the sounds of Turkish *ilahi* (literally meaning Ya Allah, a way to address Allah) songs, religious tunes in praise of Allah, Rasulullah (SAW) or his blessed Companions.

Around the square, vendors sell *Simit*, Turkey's famous sesame curls, which go so well with the strong, sweet local tea, while close by a number of street cafes and several restaurants offer their services. Across the road there is a covered market that sells merchandize sought by visitors to the area. The road to the complex is lined with small shops where camera rolls, snacks and other wares are sold. The area is serviced by buses as well as taxis. The presence of people from different areas of Turkey as well as the rest of the Islamic Countries wearing their traditional dresses paints a picture of solidarity and harmony.

Having offered the Maghrib prayers, I went to the Mazar to seek permission from my Aba Ayyub to leave. Having offered Fateha, I again begged him to pray to Allah to give me strength and time to complete the book so that our future generations are also infused with the desire to make visiting his Mazar and offering Fateha a priority of their lives. I bid farewell to him and walked to the appointed spot where my driver was to pick me up from.

Journey back to the airport was uneventful except that the driver took it upon himself to show me Aya Sofia, a masjid since the time of Sultan Muhammad the conqueror, turned in to a Museum by Kamal Ataturk. The meandering road and the historic buildings, the approaching night, the sights, lights and sounds, there was so much to see, but the flight departure time was approaching fast. I promised to myself to pay another visit to my Aba Ayyub, Insha Allah, after the book was published. With a heavy heart I bid farewell to Istanbul, the city described by Iqbal as the heart of Muslim Nation and boarded my flight.

Just like everything else in this mortal world, the most memorable visit of my life had come to an end.

## MOVE OF ANSARS TO KHURASAN WARRIORS MOVE ON

It has been narrated by some historians that Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA) had visited Herat during the reign of Hazrat Uthman bin Affan, third caliph of Islam, and had stayed there for some time. His children had developed an affinity for the place and as such his son, Abu-Mansur Ummat -ul-Ansari, came to Herat during the Caliphate of Uthman bin Affan (23-35/644-656) in the company of Ahnaf Bin Qais, the Arab General who conquered Herat (in 31/652). Abu-Mansur Ummat-ul-Ansari and his successive descendants seem to have generally lived in Balkh and Herat until Khwaja Abdullah Ansari was born in 396 H/1006 CE.

### **Ahnaf Bin Qais**

Who was Ahnaf bin Qais? What kind of power and position he enjoyed that played such a dominant role in the conquest of Persia and downfall of the Sassanid Empire? A brief introduction of this great Muslim General will be a befitting tribute.

Ahnaf bin Qais lived during the time of Rasulullah (SAW). He hailed from the Arab tribe of Banu Tamim and was born of two noble parents. His father named him Ad-Dhahhak, but everybody called him Al-Ahnaf

(the clubfooted), because of a defect in his feet. He was the motivating force behind his tribe's conversion to Islam.

Ahnaf returned to Basra after the conquest of Persia and kept fighting for the cause of Islam until the time of the caliph Ali ibn Abi Talib (martyred 660 CE) when Muslims were split into two warring parties. Ahnaf isolated himself from this trial and sent a message to Hazrat Ali saying: "I will restrain ten thousand swords from fighting you."

When Muawiyah became caliph in 661 CE, Ahnaf visited him and warned him strongly against fomenting any trouble. When he left, the caliph's sister asked angrily: "Who was that man who warned and threatened you"? He replied:

"He is the one, who, if he gets angry, a hundred thousand men from Banu Tamim get angry for him without knowing the reason behind his anger."

Al-Ahnaf spent the rest of his life in Kufa where he died at the age of seventy.

After an introduction of Ahnaf bin Qais, It would be appropriate to briefly narrate the efforts and sacrifices of Muslims in the conquest of Persia, as Khorasan was a part of it.

Sassanid Empire was a large, well-established and powerful entity. Its conquest was a major achievement and it was the result of this conquest that Islam spread throughout Persia, Afghanistan and India.

### **Conquest of Khurasan**

Khurasan was the second largest province of the Sassanid Empire. It stretched from what are now north eastern Iran, north western Afghanistan and southern Turkmenistan. Its capital was Balkh, in northern Afghanistan. In late 643 CE the mission of conquering Khurasan was assigned to Ahnaf ibn Qais.

When Hazrat Umar bin Khattab became caliph in 634 CE, Muslim conquests outside the Arabian Peninsula increased, and Ahnaf encouraged his people to participate. When the Persians surrounded a Muslim division led by Alaa ibn al-Hadrami, in Iraq, Hazrat Umar ordered Utbah bin Ghazwan to go to their rescue. Utbah sent a force of 12,000 soldiers, most of them from Banu Tamim. Ahnaf was one of them and he played a major role in breaking the siege.

In 639 CE, Ahnaf came back to Madinah bringing news of the conquest of Tustar, and informed Hazrat Umar bin Khattab about the affairs in Persia. After listening to him, Hazrat Umar said;

“May be the Persians breach the treaties so often because the Muslims mistreat them”.

Ahnaf replied:

“You have forbidden us from pursuing the enemy, and the Persian emperor is now safely amongst his people. They will continue to be at war with us as long as he is commanding them to do so, unless you allow us to go after him.”

Umar gave him permission to follow Yazdgerd III, and put him at the head of an army to complete the conquest of Khorasan.

Ahnaf followed the Persian King Yazdgerd III until he barricaded himself in the town of Marwir-Rawdh. Yazdgerd III wrote to the Turkish and Chinese rulers seeking help. Ahnaf sent for reinforcements from Kufa and finally captured Marwir-Rawdah, completing the conquest of Khurasan.

Towns beyond Khurasan signed peace agreements with Ahnaf. He then sent a letter to the caliph Umar bin Khattab informing him of the conquest, but added that Yazdgerd III had escaped and fled to Balkh. Umar forbade him to continue the pursuit deeper into Persia, but ordered him to consolidate Islam in the conquered lands. Ahnaf obeyed the orders but also kept an eye on Yazdgerd III's moves.

**Persian rebellion**

Hazrat Umar bin Khattab was assassinated in November 644 CE by a Persian slave. The assassination is often seen by various historians as a Persian conspiracy against Umar. Hormuzan is said to have masterminded this plot. Caliph Uthman ibn Affan (644–656 CE) succeeded Hazrat Umar. During his reign almost the entire former Sassanid Empire's territory rebelled from time to time until 651 CE, when the last Sassanid emperor was assassinated near Merv ending the Sassanid dynasty and Persian resistance to the Muslims. Hazrat Uthman had to send several military expeditions to crush the rebellions and recapture Persia and their vassal states. The Empire expanded beyond the borders of the Sassanid Empire in Transoxiana, Baluchistan and the Caucasus. The main rebellions were in the Persian provinces of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Fars, and Sistan (649), Tabaristan, Khorasan (651), and Makran (650).

### **Re-conquest of Khurasan**

At the death of Yazdgerd III, Hazrat Uthman bin Affan directed Abdullah bin Aamir, the Governor of Basra to undertake campaigns for the re-conquest of Khurasan. Abdullah bin Aamir took the field in person and marched as commander of a large force to Khurasan.

The vanguard of the Muslim force was led by Ahnaf bin Qais. Crossing Khurasan border, he laid siege to the two forts that served as gates to Khurasan. The Persian

garrisons there offered some resistance which was soon overcome, and the forts were captured by the Muslims. After garrisoning these forts, Ibn Aamir spread Muslim columns in various directions, and thus a multi-pronged attack was launched on Khurasan. The strategy of the Muslims was that the Persians should not be allowed to combine their forces. Thus a Muslim column advanced to the town of Rustaq Zam and captured it by assault. Another column captured the town of Bakharz. A third column invaded the town of Juban and captured it after a short siege. Another column under Aswad bin Kulsum advanced to Bayak. The Persians shut themselves in the city and closed the gates. The siege dragged on for some days with no tangible results. One night Aswad bin Kulsum managed to enter the city through a drain. The Muslim army followed him. A severe hand to hand fight took place in the city. Aswad bin Kulsum fell fighting. His brother Udham bin Kulsum then took the standard and attacked the enemy with full force and vigour. The Persians surrendered and the Muslims became the masters of Bayak. Thereafter the Muslims advanced to Tabisan which was captured after some show of resistance by the Persians.

Having conquered the region around Nishapur the Muslim force advanced to the main city of Nishapur. The city was divided into four sectors and each sector was under a Persian chief. These chiefs decided to defend



the city. They shut themselves in the city and closed the gates. The Muslims laid siege. The siege dragged on for some days, with the Muslims intensifying the blockade. In the meantime the Persian chiefs quarrelled amongst themselves. One of the chiefs entered into negotiations with the Muslims. He offered to open one of the gates for the Muslim army to enter provided he was granted immunity. The Muslims accepted the offer. One night a gate of the city was opened whereby the Muslim army entered. The Persians were taken by surprise, and the Muslims became the masters of Nishapur. After consolidating their position at Nishapur the Muslims conquered other pockets in the surrounding areas. Thereafter the Muslim army advanced and captured most of the remaining major towns and settlements.

By this time the Muslims had reconquered a greater part of Khurasan. That weakened the will of the chiefs of other parts of Khurasan to offer resistance to the victorious Muslim Army.

It is significant to mention the conquest of Merv. When the Muslim force advanced to Merv, Shahjahan, the chief of Merv surrendered without a fight and offered his submission to Ibn Aamir. A peace treaty was agreed that included a condition that the people of Merv would pay an annual tribute. In the peace treaty it was also stipulated that some lands would be allotted to the Muslims for their settlement in Khurasan. Thus began

the process that appears to be the harbinger of permanent settlement of Abu Mansoor Ummat-ul-Ansari, son of Abu Ayyub Ansari, in Khorasan. Approximate year of the settlement was 654 CE.

After the treaty of Merv the whole of Khurasan came under suzerainty of Muslims. Only a remote part of Khurasan known as Taghiristan remained independent. Ibn Aamir commissioned Ahnaf bin Qais to undertake a campaign against Taghiristan. In its advance, the Muslim force defeated Persian forces at Najirid, Marvul, Roz, Bugh and Jurjan. Thereafter they advanced to Balkh. There was not much of fighting at Balkh and the city surrendered and agreed to pay an annual tribute. With the fall of Balkh, Muslims became masters of the entire Khurasan. The campaigns in Khurasan lasted for three years from 651 to 654 C.E.

Thus began another important chapter in the history of migration of the Ansaris. For the next five hundred years or so, the descendants of Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA) lived in Balkh and Herat. Being the scions of a great Muslim scholar, they soon established themselves and became well known for their knowledge and piety. After a few generations, nine to be exact, in the home of Muhammad Abu-Mansur Ansari, a Sufi saint, a disciple of Sharif Hamza Uqaili of Termez and known for his piety, a son was born on May 4, 1006 C.E. (Shaban 2, 396 H) and was named Abdullah Abu Ismail al-Ansari. He was one of the

The map illustrates the rapid expansion of the Islamic empire in the first century of the Hijra. Key features include:

- Geographical Regions:** The Byzantine Empire is shown in pink, Persia in light blue, and the Islamic lands in green.
- Major Cities:** Constantinople, Antiochia, Aleppo, Damascus, Baghdad, Mecca, Medina, Basra, Kufa, Sufa, Esfahan, and others.
- Battle Sites and Dates:**
  - 1. Hijra, 620
  - 2. Battle of Badr, 624
  - 3. Battle of Uhud, 625
  - 4. Battle of the Trench, 627
  - 5. Conquest of Mecca, 630
  - 6. Battle of al-Yamama, 632
  - 7. Battle of al-Tar'if, 633
  - 8. Battle of Hanyun, 633
  - 9. Siege of Ta'if, 630
- Legend:**
  - Muhammad
  - The Righteous Caliphs
- Other Labels:** "The empty quarter", "Rub - al - Khali", "Sana", "Merv", "Nahapur", "Herat", "Amol", "Rhagae", "Hamadan", "Nahavand", "Istakhr", "Siraf", "Muscat", "Alexandria", "Heliopolis", "Babylon", "Caesarea", "Gaza", "Jerusalem", "Tarsus", "Seleucia", "Berytus", "Sidon", "Melitene", "Amida", "Niribis", "Mosul", "Edessa", "Van", "Salmas", "Merv".

# ARAB CONQUESTS OF CONSTANTINOPLE & KHORASAN

## KHWAJA ABDULLAH ANSARI LIFE & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

How does one gather his wits, muster courage, pick up pen and begin to write on one of the most written about personalities of his era? What is there to write about a personality so profound, so versatile, so wise, so knowledgeable, so pious, so scholarly, and so saintly that volumes have been penned on this multi-faceted spiritual giant by the foremost minds and writers of all the centuries following his birth?

So, the very thought of writing on him would humble even the most prolific of writers. And when it comes to a non-entity such as me, the burden is crushing. Yet, write I must, as I must pass on the life and achievements of this leading light and shining star from amongst our ancestors to our future generations so that their lives may also be illuminated by the beams of knowledge, piety and love of Allah that Hazrat Shaikh-ul-Islam, Peer-e-Herat, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, (RA) emanated, and continues to do so even today for those who seek guidance from him.

Having said so, the task of writing on him becomes relatively easy due to the large amount of precisely dated events of his life, especially in the works of Ibn-e-Rajab and Abdulrahman Jami, Serge de Laugier de Beaurecueil, A.G. Ravan Farhadi et al. These authors provide us an accurate account of his life

and works. There are very few literary giants who lived so many centuries ago and about whom such a wealth of accurate information has been documented. He has been extensively written about by eminent Arab as well as Persian historians and writers. Having written authoritatively in Arabic as well as Persian, he can be rightly called the bridge between the two great Islamic cultures of Arabia and Persia. It is also important to mention that it was due to his monumental effort in translating Hadith in to Persian that the Muslims of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, who together form the largest body of Muslims in the World, have also benefitted indirectly as the Ahadith were then translated from Persian in to Urdu, the language of the Muslims of the sub-continent.

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari excelled in the knowledge of Quran, Hadith and history. He used to avoid company of the rich, powerful and the influential. His yearly sermon was attended by people from far and wide. Whatever his disciples and followers used to present to him was handed over to the poor and the needy. He had an impressive personality, and used to dress gracefully. One of his most significant and ardent followers was Imam Ibn-e-Taymiyah.

It would be appropriate to present the life of this great Saint and Sufi Master divided in to stages so as to make it easy to understand the development, and later on the impact, of this great mind on Islam and Muslims, especially those who inhabit Afghanistan, Iran, India and Pakistan today.

## Birth and Early Life

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari was born in the area of Kohandezh (old citadel), Herat on the evening of Friday, 02 Shaban 396 H corresponding to May 3, 1006 CE. He said about his birth and surroundings:

*"I am 'vernal,' for I was born in the spring. I love spring very much. The Sun was in the seventeenth degree of Taurus when I was born, and every time it reaches that point again I complete another year. It is the middle of spring, the season of flowers and herbs". (Abdurrahman Jami - Nafhat-Ul-Uns).*

## Lineage

His genealogy, as per the manuscripts of his works and other authoritative sources in Arabic, Persian (Nafhat-ul-Uns) and Urdu (Tazkarah-e-Ulema-e-Farangi Mahal) is as follows:

Abu Ismail Abdullah Al-Ansari, son of  
Muhammad Abu-Mansur Balkhi, son of  
Ali Abu Maad Ansari, son of  
Muhammad, son of  
Ahmed Ansari, son of  
Ali Ansari, son of  
Jafar Ansari, son of  
Mansur Ansari, son of  
Abu Mansoor Ummat-ul-Ansari

Abu-Ayyub Khalid ibn-e- Zayd al-Khazraji al-Najjari al-Azdi, commonly known as Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari,

Ummat-ul-Ansari is also written as Mút in some scriptures. However, since it has been mentioned as Ummat-ul-Ansari in Nafhat-ul-Uns and appears to be linguistically meaningful, it is being used here. Abu Mansoor Ummat-ul-Ansari was son of Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA), a distinguished companion of Rasulullah (SAW). He came to Herat during the reign of Hazrat Uthman bin Affan (RA) (23-35 H/644-656 CE) along with the Muslim army led by Ahnaf Bin Qais, the Arab General who conquered Khorasan, of which Herat was a part of, in 31H/652CE. Abu-Mansur and his successive descendants generally lived in Herat until Khwaja Abdullah Ansari was born in 396H/1006H.

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's father, Abu Mansur Muhammad, who was a dedicated Sufi, (the "inner" or spiritual aspect of Islam) followed the way of abstinence and renunciation of worldly affairs guided by Sharif Hamza Uqaili, a Sufi Master in Balkh. Having returned to his native Herat, where he opened a shop in the bazaar, got married and had children, Abu Mansur was later on overcome by longings for his former life and, abandoning his young family, he sought the ascetic coterie around the Sharif Hamza Aqili in Balkh again, where he remained until his death in 1039.

Even before Khwaja Abdullah Ansari was born, there were ample indications and predictions that a star whose light would dazzle the eyes was about to arrive. His father, Abu Mansoor, as mentioned earlier, was a disciple of Sharif Hamza Uqaili of Termez. One day a woman visited Sharif Hamza Uqaili and asked him to get her married to Abu Mansur. When Sharif asked him to marry her, he replied that he would never do that. Sharif Uqaili said: "It is only after you get married, you will have a son". Thereafter, Abu Mansoor came back to Herat and got married. Khwaja Abdullah Ansari was thus born. Sharif Hamza Uqaili was in Balkh at that time. He is known to have said at his birth: "Our Abu Mansoor has got a son in Herat, and what a son, he is complete in every respect". The implication was that it was beyond words to praise the new born.

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari narrates a similar incident in his own words "Abu Asim is my elder and relative. I used to go to him in my childhood. Once I went to him. He gave me bread and 'Aabkama' (a type of sharp, tangy water) to eat, played 'Qawwali' (devotional hymns with music) for me and recited something. His wife, who was an old, saintly lady, said that her Peer (religious guide, and by that she meant Hazrat Khizar (AS) asked her who I was? When she told him about me, he said: "The entire East and West will be filled with his fame. Actually, it is a



habit of Hazrat Khizar (AS) to ask people even when he does not need to, as he knows everything”.

### **Schooling & Education**

Abdullah Ansari started schooling at the age of four and by the time he was six, he had learnt recitation of the Quran. At the age of nine, his father and a teacher named Jarudi began to dictate Ahadith (sayings of the Prophet) to him.

When he was nine, his father suddenly abandoned his family and shop and moved to Balkh to join his old Sufi companions.

Abdullah continued his studies. His daily routine, apart from memorization of Quran and Hadith, also included practice in writing and poetry. His grip on poetry was such that taking him to be a young student who would not be able to do so, his seniors used to give him Dari Persian verses to translate in to Arabic and craft their equivalent in Arabic. Young Abdullah used to do it on the spot, without taking too much time. He had written six thousand Arabic verses of his own and also remembered one hundred thousand Arabic verses. He is mentioned in Nafhat-ul-Uns as having said: “I used to go to Qari to learn Quran in the morning. On return I used to write six pages and memorized them. After the Quran class I used to go to Adeeb (learning and writing poetry) class at 10 a.m. and used to write the whole day. Thus I

never had any free time. I used to write Hadith at night after Isha prayers. I did not have time to eat. My mother used to put food in my mouth and I continued writing”.

Young Abdullah had the privilege to learn Uloom-e-Zahiri (visible fields of knowledge) from the following three outstanding masters of his time:

Tafseer (Explanation of Quran) from Khwaja Yahya bin Ammar Shaybani. Khwaja Shaybani was so impressed with what he saw in young Abdullah that he is said to have addressed Kohan-dezhis (dwellers of the old citadel) and asked them to take good care of Abdullah as he smelt Imammat (spiritual leadership) from him. Khwaja Shaybani died in 1030 CE.

Hadith from Abdul Jabbar Jarrahi, who taught him Jamia Tirmidhi.

Fiqh from Qazi Abu Mansoor Azdi – An authority on the subject.

In completing his education, especially his mastery of Hadith, he worked extremely long hours and suffered innumerable hardships. He knew thirty thousand Ahadith by heart. One incident in this regard that warrants special mention is presented here in his own words:

*‘In pursuit of the knowledge of Ahadith of Rasulullah (SAW) the pains I have gone through would not have*

*been borne by anybody else. Once I was travelling from Neshapur to Kohan-dez. It started raining. I kept the scripts of hadith on my stomach, went in 'Rukoo' (half bent from the waist position in praying Namaz, the Muslim prayer) as long as it rained to save them from getting wet'.*

It was due to this total, absolute and complete devotion towards learning that he achieved remarkable mastery, and came to know all that was to be known on religion and philosophy. At the young age of fourteen he sat in the company of the learned elders and discoursed wisely on all subjects under discussion. He was a living proof of the fact that some souls are born with unimaginable powers and bring with them knowledge and wisdom that others receive after decades of effort. He was born with the knowledge. He did not have to seek it. As he himself said "What I knew before learning was enough for me, that is, what I do should not be for this World, and should be for the help of Sunnah of the Muhammad Mustafa (SAW)".

### **Flight towards Sufism**

After completing his education of the visible branches of knowledge, he focussed on the fields not visible to the ordinary. He had the good fortune of finding company of those who were far ahead in the journey towards that special zone called *gnosis* and reserved

for the seekers of the divine truth. Abdullah Ansari had visited some of them with his father in his childhood. It is obvious that those visits merely benefitted him in developing an affinity with the spirituality of those he visited and receiving their blessings. The journey towards spiritual greatness was only to be achieved later through evolution of his beliefs and development of his desire to be close to the divine truth – love of Allah.

His spiritual development began with Khwaja Abu-Abdullah Taqi Sejestani, a sensitive and penetrating Sufi master who began teaching him in his adolescence and who told him, "O 'Abdullah, praise be to Allah! What a light He has put in your heart!"

It was Shaikh Taqi, from whom he acquired his attachment to Hanbalite doctrine. "He was my master and teacher in the Hanbalite creed," said Ansari. "Had I not seen him, I would have never come to know the belief of the Hanbalites."

After Shaikh Sejestani, young Abdullah spent considerable time in the company of Khwaja Yahya bin Ammar Al Shaybani, also called Shaikh Amu, who had met many Sufis (including Abu-ul-Abbas Nahawandi) during his extensive travels, and who had also built a Sufi convent (Khanqah) in a suburb of Herat. When Abdullah was only fourteen, the Shaikh

appointed him his successor. In the words of Abdullah Ansari, Shaikh Amu said “When the feet of Muhammad Mustafa (SAW) were pulled, Abu Bakr sat in his place. When Abu Bakr’s feet were pulled, Umar sat in his place, when Omar’s feet were pulled, Othman sat in his place. When Othman’s feet were pulled, Ali sat in his place. When Allah pulls my feet, Abdullah will sit in my place”. I was sitting close to his chair. He pointed at me and said “This boy is Abdullah”.

At the age of twenty, his spiritual mentor, Taqi Sejestani died, and Abdullah went to Nishapur to further study Hadith and to meet well-known Sufi masters such as Abu-Nasr Mans & Ahmad al-Mufassir, Sayrafi, and Abu-ul-Hasan Ahmad Saliti. He avoided contact with those who were influenced by Ashaarite philosophy, which included Abu-ul-Qasim- al-Qushayri (d. 1072), the author of the famous Treatise (Risala) on Sufism.

During the next year he spent considerable time in Herat in the circle of Hadith scholars. At age twenty-two, Shaikh Amu made him the director of his Khanqah (Sufi School) in Herat.

When Khwaja Abdullah Ansari was twenty-six, in 1032, he offered to accompany the elderly Imam Abu-ul-Fadl bin Saad of Herat to Mecca for Hajj (Pilgrimage). However, when the caravan reached Baghdad, it had to

return to Khorasan because of news that the roads between Iraq and Hijaz in Arabia were fraught with danger of robbers. By the spring of 1032, he was back in Herat.

He tried again the next year. While staying in Nishapur at the Khanqah of Ibn-e-Baku, he met the famous Sufi Abu-Said bin Abul-Khayr, who told him about the Sufi master, Kharaqani. He accompanied a caravan that brought him again into Iraq, to the city of Raye. However, once again, lack of security forced the caravan to return to Khorasan. While staying in the town of Damghan, he met another famous Sufi, Muhammad Qassab of Amol. On his way back to home from there, he met the extraordinary Kharaqani, an encounter which transformed his life.

Meeting Abul-Hasan Kharaqani deeply affected him. Kharaqani was an elderly and unlettered Sufi master who read into the heart of Abdullah Ansari and answered even his unspoken and unformulated questions. A few words on this great saint are necessary.

Shaikh Kharaqani (963-1033), an unlettered person who could not pronounce Arabic correctly was a typical Ovaisi, initiated not by a living master but by the powerful spirit of Syed Bayazid Bistami. About the spiritual relation between these two men, it is said that the scent of Shaikh Kharaqani reached Hazrat Bayazid Bastami long before his spiritual disciple was born and Shaikh Kharaqani used to pray every

evening in Kharaqan, then was mysteriously transported to Bistam — a typical miracle of *'rolling up space'*— pray there, and then perform the morning prayer back in his own village. Shaikh Kharaqani's prayers burned with intense love and yearning, as when he swore that he would not give his soul to the angel of death, for he had received it from Allah, and only to Him would he return. Longing for Allah made him melt away, but the Lord told him, in one of his rare dreams after long periods of sleeplessness, that the longing he had endured for sixty years was nothing, "for We have loved thee already in the pre-eternity of eternities". And he was sure that he would be resurrected among the martyrs, "for I have been killed by the sword of longing for Thee", as he asserted.

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari said, "I have a number of teachers in Hadith and Tafseer, but my Pir in Sufism is Shaikh Abu-ul Hassan Kharaqani. If I hadn't seen him, I would have never known the Divine Reality (Haqeeqat). Always 'this' would have mixed with 'that', meaning that 'Nafs' (lowest dimension of man's inward existence, his animalistic nature) would have mixed with 'Haqeeqat' (divine reality). He said to me, 'The one who eats and sleeps is someone else.' When I heard this, I myself was Kharaqani." While talking to Ansari, Kharaqani went into ecstasy (Jazb) and burst into tears. This meeting was an instance of spiritual communication.

Khawaja Abdullah Ansari speaks of his meeting with Shaikh Kharaqani in the following words, "I planned to perform Haj. I went up to Raye. Way forward was blocked. On return I went to Shaikh Kharaqani. He saw me and said: "You are my beloved. You came by boat by the river". He did not know that what he had said had come from the divine. I knew it was a sign of his greatness that he told me I have come by the river. I said, "Shaikh, I have a question." He replied, "Ask my beloved". I asked him five questions. Three were from my tongue and two I just thought in my heart. He answered all five. He was pressing my hands on his thigh, totally in a trance and tears were flowing from his eyes like a canal while he kept talking to me".

From Shaikh Kharaqani he learned that being a Sufi does not consist of outward appearance, as Shaikh Kharaqani said when asked what a Sufi was: 'One does not become a Sufi by virtue of one's patched frock and prayer-mat; one does not become a Sufi by adopting the customs and manners of the Sufis; a Sufi is that which is not'. To be a Sufi for Kharaqani meant to be totally detached and liberated from the world and all it contains, to be dependent on and desirous of nothing: "A Sufi is a day that has no need of the sun, a night that has no need of the moon and stars, a 'not-being' that has no need of 'being.' Following Shaikh Kharaqani, Khwaja 'Abdullah Ansari defines being a dervish, or Sufi, as 'something that neither harms the soles of the feet nor leaves a trail of dust behind',



by which he means that the Sufi perfects himself through absolute spiritual poverty, by reducing himself through humility until he reaches the lowliness of the dust, which, unlike stones and thorns that reach up to injure the feet of those who tread on them, is passively trampled on by the world; in divesting one's self of all worldly attachments and wants, until he becomes a "stranger to kith and kin," the Sufi "abstracts" himself from worldly possessions to the point that he is encumbered by no holdings and leaves not even a 'trail of dust' behind him.

Well aware of the pitfall of pride in one's accomplishments on the Sufi path, Khwaja Abdullah is glad for his human frailty and awareness of his disobedience to Allah's law, for it is that very awareness that brings him to his knees in repentance.

An event which happened most probably a short time after this encounter shows an evolution in Ansari's approach to Sufism.

Ahmad of Chisht and Abu Said Muallim, two Sufis, were engaged in a fierce dispute about whether it is better to be a seeker (murid) of Allah or one who is sought (murad) by Allah. They asked Ansari to arbitrate. His verdict was overwhelming: "There is no seeker, no sought, no receiving of information, no inquiry, no definition, and no description! He (Allah) is everything in everything".

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, however, did not choose the kind of Sufism that emphasizes seeking of ecstatic experiences. What happened to him during a gathering of Sufis that he attended in Nobadhan in 1034 (near Herat and now called Nawbadam) when he was 28 years old further solidified his views. He had participated in a "spiritual cert" (Sama) and tore his shirt in a moment of ecstasy. He was also very much venerated by the sixty-two Sufis present in that gathering and was offered many gifts. His response was to hurriedly leave the meeting, without taking the gifts, and to return to Herat. He had become sharply aware of the dangers of being overly revered by others and of being attached to seeking ecstasy. He chose to commit himself to a Sufism of sobriety and lucidity (Sahw), rather than the delirious and frenzied kind.

Leaving aside his polemic in the Munajat, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari reproached ascetics for being merely "wage-earners of heaven." In their dry abstinence, ascetics deprive themselves of the pleasures of this world in the hope of gaining the same pleasures as a reward, or wage, in the next world. What they lack is the love and yearning for Allah that are the hallmarks of the true Sufi. Devoid of both, the fear of hell-fire and anticipation of heavenly reward, the true Sufi labours purely for Allah's sake, for the delight of serving Him without thought for compensation either now or in the Hereafter. As Rabia Basri (RA) said in her famous prayer:

*“O Allah, if I worship Thee from fear of Hell, burn me in Hell, and if I worship Thee in hope of Paradise, exclude me thence, but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, then withhold not from me Thine Eternal Beauty.”*

### **Trials and Tribulations**

In the year 1038, his teacher of Ahadith, Abu-Yaqub, died and the revered Khwaja took charge of the teaching. The same year he was summoned to the court of Sultan Masud in Herat.

Still, abandoned by the father, the family remained destitute, but was helped by some well-wishers and friends.

His father died in Balkh the next year. In 1039, he was again summoned to the court of the Sultan, accused by the Asharites of teaching anthropomorphism (tashbih). The Sultan, having listened to him, was reassured of the soundness of his teaching and he was felicitated with honours.

Around the year 1040, at the age of 34, he wrote his famous treatise ‘Forty Traditions on the Divine Unity’ (Al-Arbaeen Fi Dalail-al-Tawhid).

Two years later, in 1041, he was prohibited from teaching by an assembly of clerics. He self-exiled himself and lived in the town of Shakiwan, near Poshanj until 1043. In 1044, at the age of 38, he returned to Herat and re-started his teaching of Quran's commentary.

In 1046, another assembly of theologians presented a petition against him and he was banished from Herat and imprisoned (with chains) for five months in Poshanj. However, two years later, he was again back in Herat and resumed his Quran's commentary. During that period, he concentrated on interpretation of the second Surah of the Quran, verses 160-65, about those who are "the most ardent in their love of Allah." On November 30, 1049, Shaykh Amu died. After that, Ansari lived at home in extreme poverty. Since he was generally well-dressed while teaching his disciples and friends were unaware of his poverty. He never bared his poverty on anybody other than his Lord, his true Sustainer, and surely He looked after him.

### **Years of Glory**

Due to his tremendous grasp on religious subjects and his spiritual presence and powers, by 1053 Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's reputation had spread all over the Seljukid and Abbassid Empires. He was visited by

Abul-Hasan of Bakharz and Abul-Qasim al-Bari of Zozan, amongst a host of others. His students and disciples ran in to thousands. Who would not want to benefit from a flowing river of knowledge and spirituality?

The following year those closest to him became aware of his poverty and began offering gifts to him. In 1055, a Hanafi judge, Abul Ala Said b. Sayyar, offered him a place in the major Masjid of Herat in order to teach Quran's commentary and to preach.

At the age of 50, in the years 1056-57, the great Sufi Master dictated "Sad Maidan" (The Hundred Grounds), a mnemonic Sufi manual in Dari-Persian, to one of his students. Sad Maydan remains, to this day, one of the most read and revered books on Sufism and a guide for those who strive to be close to Allah.

During those years his friends and students supported him and his economic situation improved. He said, "Allah has never found me, even for half a day, hunting for the wealth of this world. Friends, themselves, are offering me so many of the things that I desired during earlier times. Yet, although even it were the kingdom of Solomon, it would be meaningless to me now?"

In 1059, some of his opponents made an unsuccessful petition to the Seljuk leader, Alp Arslan to prohibit him from teaching.

In 1064, his opponents tried to provoke a dialogue with him in the presence of the Sultan Alp Arslan, and his Vizier, Nizam-ul-Mulk Toosi. Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, fearless and totally oblivious to who was present, refused to discuss anything other than the Quran and the Sunnah (ways and teachings of Rasulullah (SAW), and walked away from the court.

Two years later, his opponents succeeded in obtaining an expulsion order against him from the Vizier, Nizam-ul-Mulk Toosi. However, by that time his fame had spread far and wide and the number of his disciples and students had grown to such a great extent that they carried the revered saint on their shoulders from Hirat to Balkh, a distance of four hundred miles and a journey that took ten days. However, he was exiled for a short time only, and was subsequently given permission to return to Herat.

The Vizier subsequently corrected himself and adopted a policy in favour of the traditionalists. (Khwaja Abdullah Ansari had refused a robe of honour sent to him by the Vizier. after an opponent named Dabusi asked him un-courtly questions about

Asharite philosophy in the presence of the Vizier, Ansari took umbrage and left the meeting).

By the year 1068, he continued to preach in the Grand Masjid of Herat and also taught Quran's commentary (Tafsir). He continued to guide the novices in his Sufi Khanqah.

Next year his opponents made an attempt to accuse him of anthropomorphism in the presence of the Sultan. However, they failed and later in the same year (1069), he was sent a robe of honour from Baghdad by the Caliph Al-Qaim on the suggestion of Nizam-ul-Mulk.

In 1071, it was chronicled that Marzuq Mutamin Saji and Muhammad bin Tahir, two of his close associates in the Sufi convent and they looked after him as he was growing old and needed assistants in the discharge of his duties.

Next year, at the age of 66, he suffered from a severe illness but recovered. However, his eyesight was constantly weakening.

During his late sixties and seventies, he continued to teach Traditions (Ahadith), Quran's commentary (Tafsir), and Sufism. However, in 473H/1080CE, at the age of 74, he lost his eye sight.

In spite of this severe handicap Khwaja Abdullah Ansari continued to dictate Quran's commentary and Sufi teachings. Some of his young students, such as Abdul Awwal Sejzi, Abdul Malik Karrokhi and Muhammad Sayadalani served as his scribes. During this period his secretary, Hussain Kotobi, took care of his daily chores and requirements. In the year 1082, he dictated 'Manazil-al-Saerin', (Stations of the Wayfarers) the famous Sufi manual, in Arabic, to his young novices. During the same year, Caliph Al-Muqtadi sent him a robe of honour and awarded him the title "Shaikh-ul-Islam" (the "Senior of Islam"). In December 1085 (Ramadan 478), Khwaja Abdullah Ansari severely criticized a scholar of scholastic rationalism (Kalam) who had come to Herat. Ansari's followers burnt down the scholar's house and beat him up. As a result, he and his companions were exiled and ordered to go to Balkh.

The next year, at age 80, on April 21, 1087, he was triumphantly welcomed back to Herat, where he continued to teach Quran's commentary.

### **Titles and Accolades**

The name "Khwaja" which often precedes Abdullah Ansari's name in Persian writings means 'Master', and was a term used by Firdausi in his Shah-Nama written in 1000 CE. It was traditional, and still is, for



descendants of the major companions of the Prophet living in Persian-speaking lands to be addressed by this honorific title.

He has also been written as Harawi (from Herat) by his Arab biographers rather than "Ansari".

His title, "Shaikh-ul-Islam" ("The Senior of Islam"), was recorded in the decree of the 'Abbasid Caliph Al-Qaim in 462/1070. This title is often used by authors who quote him. The decree also contained the titles "Shaikh-ul-Shuyookh" ("Senior of the seniors") and "Zayn-ul-Ulema" ("Ornament of the Scholars"). He was also given the title of "Nasir al-Sunnah" ("Supporter of the Prophetic Tradition").

Abul Adl al-Maybodi, author of 'Kashf-ul-Asrar' called him 'Pir-e-Herat' when quoting his Sufi commentaries. This title was later used in Persian texts.

The name "Abdullah" (Servant of Allah) is more correctly written as 'Abd-Allah,' but it is commonly written as Abdullah and as such it is being spelled as such here.

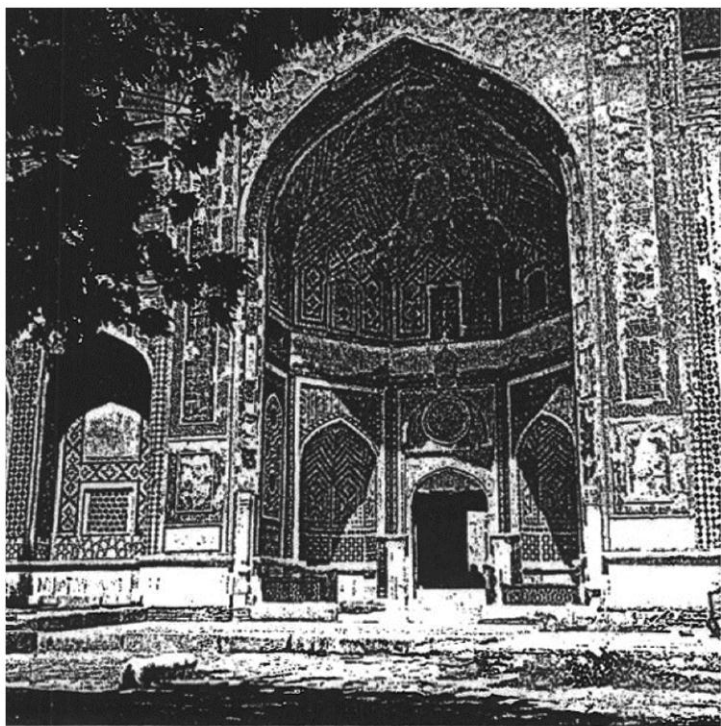
## **Death Drops the Curtain**

On Friday, 22 Dhul-Hajj 481, corresponding to March 8, 1089, this beacon of light, this sun of divine knowledge, this fearless defender of Quran and

Sunnah and undoubtedly one of the greatest proponents of the love of Allah as the ultimate aim of all seekers, after enlightening those who sought the divine truth and knowledge for over six decades, breathed his last at the age of 82 years.

He was buried on a rainy day at Gazargah, near the Khanqah and the tomb of Shaikh Amu. Since then, his shrine, built during the Timurid Dynasty, has become a major and popular pilgrimage site. The entrance to the shrine was reconstructed in 1428, on the orders of Shah Rukh, by an architect named Zaid-ud-din. Zaid-ud-din revered Hazrat Abdullah Ansari so much that he asked to be buried facing the shrine, with his tombstone in the form of a kneeling dog. A stencil of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's Mazar along with the tombstone of this most fortunate devotee is also being reproduced here.

Ansaris of Yusufpur are lucky to have an ancestor like him. Let us pray that all of us follow the example set by him in his pursuit of the divine truth, his quest for knowledge, his fearless defence of Quran and Sunnah, his abhorrence of the wealthy, his flight from worldly praise and his love of the All Mighty Allah. Ameen!



The tomb of Abdullah Ansari, in Gazar-gah of Herat. This entrance to the shrine was reconstructed in 1428, at the order of Shah Rukh, by an architect named Zain-ud-din, who so revered Ansari that he asked to be buried facing the shrine, with his tombstone in the form of a kneeling dog. It may be seen in the left of the plate above.

*Photo by Masatoshi Konishi, 1967*

## KHAWJA ABDULLAH ANSARI RELIGIOUS BELIEFS (MASLAK) AND WORKS

The early education Khwaja Abdullah Ansari received that had a seminal impact on his religious inclination and grooming was through Shaikh Taqi Sejestani, a Hanbali who began teaching him in his adolescence and who told him, "O Abdullah, praise be to Allah! What a light He has put in your heart!"

It was Shaikh Taqi Sejestani who instilled in him his attachment to Hanbalite doctrine. "He was my master and teacher in the Hanbalite creed," said Khwaja Abdullah Ansari. "Had I never seen him, I would have never come to know the belief of the Hanbalites."

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari became a leading figure of the Hanbali school of Sunni Islam. And it is through Hanbali biographers who recorded detailed and precise information in Arabic as well as Persian (Ibn-e-Rajab, Jami, et al.) that we have such a well-documented life of this grand Sufi master.

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari chose to follow the stern Hanbalite School of law. The traditional idea that Hanbalite Rigorism and mystical emotion are mutually exclusive can no longer be maintained. He was not the

only energetic representative of this school. Shaikh Abdul-Qadir Gilani (R A), founder of the most widespread branch of Sufi doctrine, Silsila-e-Qadria, also belonged to the Hanbali School. Perhaps it was the strict adherence to the outward letter of the Allah given law and the deep respect for the divine word that enabled him and his fellow Hanbalites to reach a deeper and greater understanding of the secrets of the divine reality.

A number of similarities can be drawn between the lives of the Imam ibn Hanbal (164-241Hijri/780-855 CE) and Khwaja Abdullah Ansari. Both spent their childhoods in poverty and faced hardships. Both were erstwhile students of Hadith and then became exalted teachers of the subject. Both vehemently opposed rationalistic views of the philosophers (the Mutazilites, in the case of Ibn Hanbal; the Asharites, in the case of Ansari). Both believed that the Word of Allah (the Quran) is pre-eternal (Qadim) and not "created" (Makhluq). Both were persecuted by those in power and showed great steadfastness and perseverance during the trials and tribulations faced by them due to their beliefs. They neither compromised with their doctrinal opponents, nor engaged in duplicity of any kind. It was as if they took these hardships as a part of their journeys toward attainment of the Ultimate Truth. From the writings in *Nafahat-ul-Uns* and other recordings, it becomes obvious that Khwaja Abdullah Ansari considered Ibn-e-

Hanbal his role model. Following is an excerpt from one of his poems:

*I am a Hanbalite, while living and dying.  
This is my testament, O brothers, to you!*

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari quoted Ibn-e-Hanbal as saying, "Knowledge (Maarfah of Allah) is not 'created' (Makhlūq), because the created cannot attain to the Creator." He also reports that: "Once, the great Sufi master Abu-Hamza of Baghdad (d. 289/902) was in the presence of Ahmad Ibn-e-Hanbal. Someone asked a question. Ibn Hanbal said to Abu-Hamza: 'Ajib, Ya Sufi'. (O Sufi, give the answer). He repeatedly reminded the novices about the great Sufi masters who were Hanbalites. His Hanbalism is based on the principle that the Quran and Hadith are the basic sources of religious sciences. His Sufism is also based on this principle, since he views Sufism as an integral part of Islam. One cannot be a wayfarer (sayir) toward Allah without being a good Muslim. Khwaja Abdullah Ansari blamed the Asharites "who do not know even a single hadith" by saying, "They consider the followers of Sunnah to be deprived of (religious) knowledge!"

"A Supplement to the Generations of Hanbalites" (Dhayl Ala Tabaqat al-Hanabila) by Ibn Rajab Baghdadi (d. 795/1393) expressed great respect for the Sufi Hanbalites. Ibn

Rajab's work is also a valuable source on the biography of Khawaja Abdullah Ansari of Herat.

### **Hanbali Split - Birth of Wahhabi Movement**

Mention must be made here of a new school of Hanbalism founded by Ibn-e-Taimiyya (661-728/1263-1328). He was a literalist (accused of being anthropomorphist) who wrote against the Sufi masters (particularly Ibn-e-Arabi) and called them "innovators" (Ahl al-bid'a). He was a forerunner of the Salafi movement, which is also critical of Sufi congregations, and sometimes of Sufism in general. Salafi scholars have not belonged only to the Hanbalite School, but to the other three schools of Sunni Islam as well.

However, Ibn-e-Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1350 C.E.), in his "Kitab-e-Asrar-ul-Salat" (Book of the Secrets of Prayer) includes a Sufi interpretation of prayer, saying, "He is the Most High Who praises Himself through the tongue of the praising one". In spite of the critical tenor of his commentary on Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's "Manazil al-Sayarin", he does not seem to be anti-Sufi or anti-Ansari. According to Ibn Qayyim, the "Station" is useful in so far as it facilitates the understanding of the spiritual itinerary for the journey toward Allah. Ibn-e-Qayyim believes in the stages, grades, and stations of the journey which are based on Quranic texts. He cannot be called an opponent of Sufism, but can be viewed as a

"severe interpreter" of it. His bulky "Grades of the Wayfarers" (Madarij al-Salikin) deserves to be read.

Ibn Taymiyya's doctrine was given a new dimension by Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhab (1115-1201/1703-1787), the founder of Wahhabism. Wahhabism considers Sufi beliefs and practices objectionable innovations (bid'a). As the majority of Hanbalites (in Arabia and the Gulf region) are now followers of Wahhabism (sometimes called the "Salafi" way), the great traditional figures of Hanbalism who respected Sufism are no longer considered as deserving the attention of researchers. The official media and popular publications in those countries prefer to abstain from mentioning those great Hanbalite figures of Sunni Islam who were also great Sufis.

However, the Urdu, Persian and English speaking Sunnis and Shias admire Khwaja Abdullah Ansari because of his "Intimate Invocations" (Munájat). Shia intellectuals also greatly appreciate his other works. The ten volumes of his Quranic commentary (Kashf-al-Asrar), written in Dari-Persian, continue to be reprinted in Tehran, the Capital of a country where Shias are the majority. But most Arabic-speaking Muslims and many Urdu-speaking Muslims seem to be unaware of the significance of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's works. It is noteworthy that "Munájat Namah", one of the most famous books in Sufi literature, originally written in Dari Persian, the native



dialect of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, has been translated in to English, French, German and even Spanish. Yet it waits to see it being translated in to Urdu, the lingua Franca of Muslims of the Sub-Continent who are the largest single body of Muslims in the World.

Ansari's Hanbalite doctrinal stand set him squarely at odds with the then dominant school of theological interpretation of his times, the scholastic Asharism. Dead set against allowing any "heretical innovation", the Hanbalites clung to the letter of the Koran and Sunnah (the practice of the early community as reported in hadith) and vehemently rejected any rational deliberations on theological concerns. For them, the literal meaning of the divine word of the Koran and the utterances of the Prophet were the final authority on all matters theological.

While rationalists might explain anthropomorphic allusions in the Koran to, for example, Allah's "hand" by saying that it was to be taken metaphorically for His power or that it was a quality and not a corporeal member, the Hanbalites maintained that when Allah had said "hand" in His Koran, He meant a corporeal hand and nothing else. Their strictly literal interpretation thus laid the Hanbalites open to charges of anthropomorphism and even idolatry by the politically more powerful Asharites of the time. And a ferociously tenacious Hanbalite—"bigoted" and "fanatic" said

some—like Abdullah Ansari was made to suffer for his beliefs by being barred from teaching and was even sent into exile.

Although blind in his old age, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari remained an active teacher of Islamic sciences, maintaining his animosity toward the rationalist schools of thought, and master to his devoted disciples until his death in 1089. His tomb at Gazargah, just outside of heart is one of the most venerated sites in the Muslim world.

At variance with the latitudinarian attitude of many later Sufis but in keeping with the precepts of many of the masters of spirituality, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's strict Hanbalite adherence to the letter of Islamic law and custom and fastidious attention to ritual detail in no way excluded, and in many ways actually complemented, the inner, or spiritual, path of Islam known as Sufism. By meditating on the words of the Koran and the Custom of the Prophet, the Sufis discovered within themselves a personal deity with whom they could have direct and immediate contact through a gnosis, or knowledge, that depended in no way on the rational function of the intellect but rather on the intuitive function of the heart. Throughout his *Munajat* the reader will find allusions to, and expansions of, the Arabic dictum, "*Mun 'arafa nafsahu fa-qad 'arafa rabbahu*" (Who knows himself, knows his Lord).

Well aware of the pitfall of pride in one's accomplishments on the Sufi path, Khwaja Abdullah was glad in his human frailty and awareness of his disobedience to Allah's law, for it is that very awareness that brought him to his knees in repentance. The reader of the Munajat will notice that the two concepts of "obedience" (Itaat) and "disobedience" (másiyat) are stressed throughout. In Islam, the Quran is Allah's Word, in which His eternal Law for mankind was revealed to Rasulullah (SAW). The precepts enjoined therein are binding upon all who profess Islam (which means "submission" to Allah's will and command). A Muslim (in Arabic the word means "one who submits to Allah") therefore freely subjugates his own will to Allah's and chooses to obey His commands as a faithful servant. The True Way then lies in obedience to Allah, and deviation from that Path consists of disobedience to, or violation of, Allah's law. Whereas the Islamic schools of legal thought were generally of the opinion that men were to be held accountable for external breaches of the divinely legislated code (sharia), the Sufis, who trod the inward "path of the heart", felt that they would be held accountable for any "disobedience" in thought, word, or deed.

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari taught his disciples that devoid of both, fear of hell-fire and anticipation of heavenly reward of Paradise, the true Sufi labours purely for

Allah's sake, for the delight of serving Him without thought for compensation either now or in the Hereafter. He so aptly wrote:

*Know that when you learn to lose yourself,  
You will reach the Beloved.*

*There is no other secret to be learnt,  
And more than that is not known to me.*

### **His Works**

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's intellectual accomplishments are amazing in the light of difficulties he had to face during his career. Among the great number of books written in both Arabic and Persian, the 'Manazil us-Sairin', (The Stations on the Way) has had several commentators. Pir-e-Herat also translated Sulami's Tabaqaat into Dari, the Persian dialect spoken in his region. However, in spite of his many works in theoretical Sufism, his smallest book has won him the greatest admiration: the 'Munajat Namah', literally meaning "Litanies or dialogues with Allah", a prayer book in rhyming Persian prose, interspersed with some verses, in which he pours out his love, his longing, and his advice. The simple and melodious Persian prose makes this small book a true vade mecum for anyone who needs a devotional aid for meditation in lonely hours.

Nothing shows better the change in emphasis and style, in Sufi outlook and expression, than a comparison of his *Manajat Namah* with another small book written in the same mixture of poetry and prose in the same city of Herat 400 years later, by the author who reworked Ansari's book and relied heavily upon him, namely the "*Lawaiih*", by Maulana Jami. This book has become one of the most widely used manuals of later Sufi teachings—but in its intellectual and rational approach to the divine truth, its high-flown technical expression about absolute existence and relative being, it is far from the intense earnestness and simplicity of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's *Manajat Namah*.

Ceaseless in his efforts on behalf of Hanbalism, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari wrote several books in which he attacked the rationalists and their method. His largest polemical work is 'Dhamm al-Kalam wa-ahlih' (The Shame of the Theological Dialectic and of Those Who Practice It), in which he proved that the Prophet predicted and condemned, in advance, the conspiracies of the theologians in their subtle discourses, discussions, interpretation of the Koran independent of Sunnah, opposition of reason to hadith, exercise of personal initiative to fathom religion, interpretations that attempted to go beyond the literal sense, and attention accorded to what other religions had to say.

In the second part of this book he showed that all the religious authorities in Islam had rejected these attempts; he collected their statements and grouped them according to the periods in which the authors lived. In his “Kitab Al Arbain fi al-Tawhid” (Book of Forty in Proof of Divine Unity), most likely written between 1064 and 1070, he collected forty hadiths in order to prove the reality of Allah's corporeal attributes. He is also known to have written a number of pamphlets debunking the theological claims of several groups considered by him to be heretical innovators.

In the field of mysticism, his works that survive include his famous “Tabaqat al-Sufiyya”, a translation into Herati Persian in expanded format of Sulami's (d. 1021) ‘Tabaqat al-Sufiyyin’, a collection of brief biographical notices and sayings of prominent Sufis. This work, put together as a volume by one or more of the Khwaja's disciples who had access to his notes, was one of the major sources for Abdul Rahman Jami (1414-1492) in his authoritative “Nafahaat ul-Uns”. In the very beginning Jami states that wherever in the book the title Shaikh-ul-Islam will be used, it will refer to the one and only – Khwaja Abdullah Ansari. In the teachings, comments on his predecessors, development of doctrinal points, poetry, and Munájats it contains, this rambling opus gives a vivid picture of Abdullah Ansari, the great Sufi master.

After meeting Shaikh Kharaqani, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari soared to new heights of spiritual development, and so did his output. The enthusiastic and demanding master caused a spiritual change in Abdullah Ansari, with the result that he began to write his commentary on the Quran. However it was never finished. A probable cause could be the advent of the Seljuqs in eastern Iran in 1041 and the hardships it brought on him; he was persecuted, spent years in destitution, and endured much suffering at the hands of the authorities as they supported Asharite theology. Thus, his commentary on the Koran was never finished. However, as it forms the basis of "Kashf al-Asrar wa uddat-ul-abrar," begun in 1126 by Rashid al-Din Ahmad Maybudi, one can see his thought and method of mystical Quranic interpretation at work.

His other, smaller works are mainly of the nature of hand-books of Sufism and treatises on mystical states and stages. "Sad Maydan" (The One Hundred Fields), Ansari's first work, centres almost exclusively on love for Allah and shows the development of his thought on the spiritual Path to 1056. "Manazil ul-Sairin", one of Khawaja Abdullah's most widely circulated works, treats the mystical progression toward unity with the Divine in a more mature fashion. Dictated to his disciples Abul-Waqt Sijzi, Abd al-Malik Karukhi, and Muhammad Saydalani, this often commented-on book was completed

475 H (1082-1083 CE). In “Ilal-ul-Maqamat”, an expansion on one aspect dealt with in the Manazil, Khwaja expounds on the dangers involved in each of the mystical “stages” (maqamat). “Kanz al-salikin”, a vademecum for the aspirant Sufi, is also known as the pseudo Manazil. ‘Al-Mukhtasar fi adab al-sufiyya” is a breviarium on the correct comportment of a Sufi. The “Nasihat-Nama-i-Vazir” or “Nasiha-i-Nizam al-Mulk” falls in the genre of sage counsel, this one addressed to the Grand Vizier of the Seljuqs, Nizam-al-Mulk.

### **Munajat Namah**

Of all of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's works, the one that has remained the most popular through the centuries and the one that has exercised the most profound influence on Persian stylistics is the Munajat Namah. The word Munajat is derived from the Arabic verb, *naja*, which means "to have an intimate conversation with someone". The sentences that are contained in the Munajat form an intensely personal and familiar monologue addressed to Allah. Each sentence begins with the Arabic vocative *Ilahi* ("my Allah"), a device used by Kharraqani in many of his recorded sayings and one that Ansari may have adopted from his spiritual master. The Munajat was not composed by Ansari as a separate work; the collection was made by his students and disciples, who culled his other works, mainly the *Tabaqat*, and extracted sentences of the munajat type to



form a "sampler" of Ansari's rapport with Allah. Over the centuries, in the words of Ansari's modern editor, the *Munajat* has often changed its complexion and has also "snowballed." Indeed, to judge by content alone without regard to style, some of the book as it is now known cannot be ascribed to Khwaja Abdullah, betraying as it does elements common to later Sufistic thought. The language in which Ansari wrote and dictated as we know from the oldest surviving manuscripts of his corpus was the dialect form of Persian current in 11<sup>th</sup> century Herat. The dialectal peculiarities, however, have been normalized by successive copyists and redactors, who, typical of pre-modern litterateurs in the Perso-Arabic tradition, did not hesitate to make "corrections" and "amendments," not to speak of additions, in accordance with their own personal taste. The result is a collection of prose sentences, characteristically rhymed, the ascription of which to the *Pir-e-Herat* rests on a certain historical basis but to which later accretions have adhered. What the modern collection does share with the original core of the work is the intimate, personal, and conversational tenor the speaker adopts in addressing Allah. Couched in sometimes humble, sometimes reproachful language, the speaker assumes the familiar position vis-à-vis Allah that a faithful servant of long tenure might assume in speaking to his master. Khwaja Abdullah Ansari is aware that his obligation to Allah is so over-whelming that he is

incapable of even beginning to utter thanks. At the same time he is not beyond a good-natured chide at Allah for having put mankind in to such an awkward position, ontologically speaking.

The format given the Munajat by his disciples consists of isolated prose sentences in no particular order and with no particular relation with each other, among which are scattered lines of his poetry and an occasional quatrain. As this mixture of prose and poetry was adopted by Saadi of Shiraz in his *Gulistan*, one of the undisputed masterpieces of Persian literature, it is interesting to speculate that he has taken the great Khwaja's Munajat as a model. As a genre, the Munajat gained in popularity after Ansari and even became an essential part of the Persian epic romance, taking its place between the sections on Allah's unity and on the Prophet.

Although we can render, however imperfectly, the sense of the Munajat into English, the peculiar Persian formal expression is lost to us. Ansari's sentences appear to be the essence of stylistic simplicity, yet masked by the brevity and conciseness of expression is a considerable amount of subtle rhetorical play. The parallelism and internal rhyme characteristic of so many of the prose sentences are devices impossible to recapture in translation.

Frequent use is also made of the script-pun, where two words or compounds are spelled alike in Persian but differ by an extra, unwritten morphological vowel, as *taj-dar* ("crowned") and *taj-i-dar* ("crown of the gallows"), which occurs elsewhere ("Hallaj said . . . ") . The use of near homonyms, such as *táat* ("obedience") and *táqat* ("endurance"), and of pseudo-etymology, where two words appear to be derived from the same root but are actually not, as *hajat* ("need") and *hujjat* ("proof, defence"), is responsible for a juxtaposition of concepts that in translation often appears peculiar; but this is true of much of Persian artful prose and certainly of poetry.

### **A Writer Who 'Almost' Never Wrote**

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari of Herat is considered to be a "great writer." and yet he almost never wrote. Most of his works that are available to us are based on the notes of students and novices, notes which he rarely checked or edited (including the "*Manazil-al-Sayirin*"). In some cases, a work was expanded by a scholar (such as the "*Kashf-ul-Asrar*," the commentary and exegesis of the Quran); in other cases a work was left in the form of crude "notes de cours" (as with the "*Tabaqat-al-Sufiyya*").

Khwaja Abdullah Ansari was more of a teacher who lectured than an author who wrote. His training as a student and later as a teacher of Hadith, enhanced by his prodigious memory, enabled him to speak like a book.

He was the first to prepare short mnemonic treatises on very complicated and difficult subjects of Sufism. These treatises strikingly resemble (in form, but not substance), twentieth century manuals of students of the "humanities" that were meticulously prepared for taking frightening entrance examinations. Such is the case of the "Hundred Grounds" (Sad Maydan) and the "Stations of Wayfarers" (Manazil-al-Sayirin).

A number of books, treatises, minor works, and a listing of Persian works have been attributed to him in the manuscripts of the 15th century and later (but not authenticated by the early manuscripts). However, in the latter case, one cannot reject these later manuscripts outright, because some of their contents can be substantially traced to early manuscripts. An example of this is the "Treatise on the Heart and Soul" (Risala-e-Dil-o-Jaan) found only in a 15th century manuscript). It contains part of the text, or a paraphrase, of what we read in two pages from the "Commentary on the Quran" (Kashf-ul-Asrar). In a general way, many parts of the texts found in the 15th century manuscripts can also be traced in earlier manuscripts (such as the "Kashf-al-Asrar" and the "Tabaqat".

All the works of Khawaja Abdullah Ansari did not have the same fortune. Among Arab scholars, and those using Arabic as their only means for studying Sufism, he was

known only for his "Stations of the Wayfarers" (Manazil-al-Sayirin) and by the name of "Harawi" (the "Herat").

Among Persian-speaking peoples, and those who know Persian, scholars study the "Tabqaat" and the "Kashf-al-Asrar" (all published in the last decades). However, thousands of common readers only read the "Intimate Invocations" (Munajat). The great Khwaja, as in his day, continues to maintain a popular fame. During the last centuries, his celebrity and the continued popular attachment to him have become established facts. His admirers, many of whom are semi-literate and have never heard of the other works of the Master, can recite his ecstatic "Invocations" in Persian while these works are unknown to Arab scholars, who know him only as an austere Sufi master.

As descendants of this great Sufi master, writer and religious luminary, it behoves us to try and live a life based on what he wrote and taught to his hundreds of thousands of disciples in his lifetime, and other millions of devotees and followers who, to this day, seek his help, guidance and blessings in times of trial. His love of Allah, fearless defence of his beliefs, ever readiness to face hardships, his abhorrence of the company of rich, his avoidance of praise and accolades, and his intellectual contribution towards all branches of knowledge of Islam are worth emulating and living for. The Ansaris of

Yusufpur must strive towards attainment of some, if not all, of these sterling traits of his character.

### **Books, Treatises & Minor Works**

Found in Early Manuscripts and quoted by Khwaja Abdullah Ansari's earliest Biographers:

#### **Works on Faith, Creed and Shariah**

1. "Kashf al-Asrar" (in student notes for many years) in Dari-Persian - "Unveiling of the Secrets" (Commentary on the Qur'an) edited by Maybodi (d. 1126 C.E.). Collected and published in ten volumes in 1952. Reprinted in 1960

2. "Dham al-Kalam-wa-Ahl-ih" in Arabic. "Condemnation of Scholastic Rationalism and Its Followers". Manuscripts available, but not yet published.

3. "Takfir al-Jahmiyya" (Title mentioned in the "Dham al-Kalam"). "Impiety of the Jahmites" - Manuscript not discovered.

4. Titles of Arabic treatises mentioned in other works:

- a. Forty Traditions (Ahadith) on the Attributes of (of Allah)" (Arbain- fi-Sifat)
- b. "Forty Traditions (Ahadith) in the (Orthodox) Tradition (Arbain-fi-Sunnah)
- c. "The Distinction between the Attributes (of Allah)" (Al-Farq-fi Sifat)

d. "The Fundamentals" (Al-Qawa'id)

e. Excellences of Ibn Hanbal" (Manaqib Ahmad Ibn Hanbal)

Texts of some of these short treatises have not been discovered yet.

### **Works on Sufism**

1. "Tabaqat-al-Sufiyya" (in student notes for many years) in Dari-Persian - "The Generations of the Sufis" Published in one volume of 968 pages, 1983.

### **Works on Spiritual Stages**

1. "Sad Maydan" (1056 C.E.), "The Hundred Grounds" in Dari-Persian Published many times since 1954.

2. "Manazil-al-Sayirin" (1082 C.E.), in Arabic "The Stations of the Wayfarers" Critical text published in 1962. Persian translation published in 1976.

3. "Ilal-al-Maqamat" (about 1085 C.E.), in Arabic. "The Flaws in the Stages" Published in 1956.

4. "Maquat-o-Andarz-ha" "Sayings and Advice" (uttered at various times over many years) in Dari-Persian Incorporated in the "Kashf al-Asrar" and the "Tabaqat".

### **Devotional Invocations**

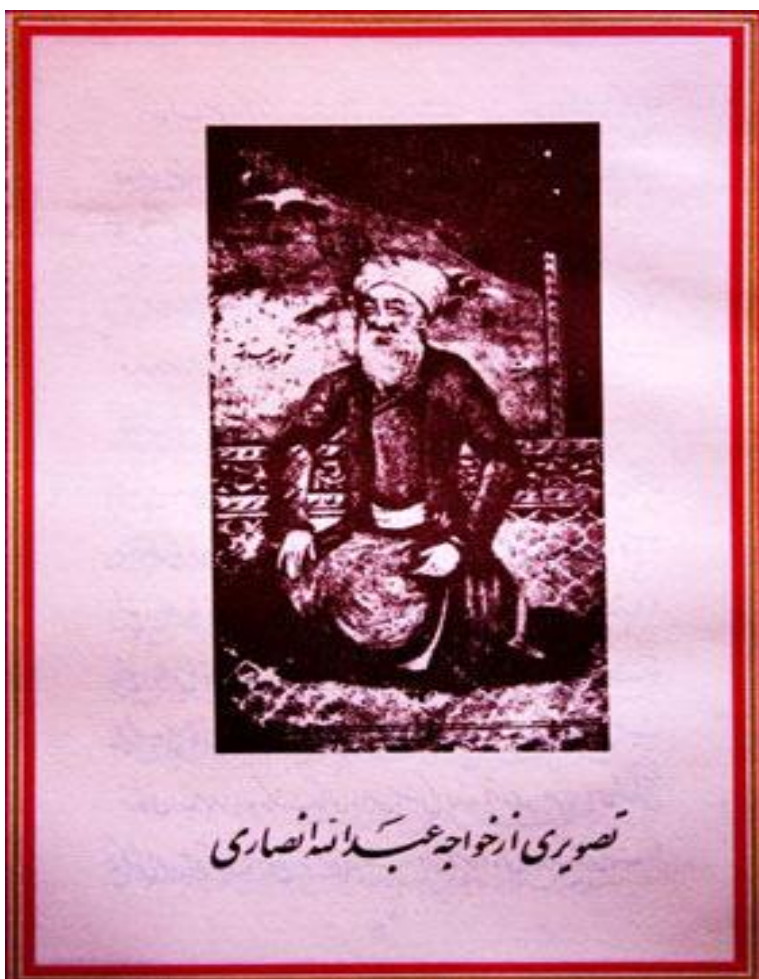
1. "Munajat Namah" - "Intimate Invocations" (uttered at various times over many years in Dari-Persian. It was

also incorporated in the "Kashf al-Asrar" and in the "Tabaqat").

Persian Works Attributed to Ansari in the Manuscripts of the 15th Century and Later But Not Authenticated by the Early Manuscripts

1. Kanz-ul-Salikin (Zad-al-Arifeen)
2. Parda-e-Hejab
3. Su'al-e-Del-az-jan
4. Qalandar Nama
5. Muhabbat Nama
6. Waridat
7. Asrar Nama
8. Ilahi Nama
9. Munajat
10. Nasihat (ba Nizam-ul-Mulk)





A PAINTING OF KHAWAJA  
ABDULLAH ANSARI

14  
A TRIBUTE TO THE KHWAJA  
BY  
DR. ANNEMARIE SCHIMMEL

*Note: Dr. Annemarie Schimmel (1922-2003) was born in Germany and became a renowned and influential Orientalist, historian and a prolific author on Islam and Sufism before she passed away on 26 January 2003.*

*She was also an honorary professor at the University of Bonn, published more than one hundred books on Islamic literature, mysticism and culture and additionally translated a variety of Islamic poetry to English and German from languages such as Persian, Urdu, Arabic, Sindhi and Turkish. Pakistan honoured her with their highest civil order, known as the Hilal-e-Imtiaz or 'Crescent of Excellence'. She received many other awards from a number of countries, including Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in 1995, which proved controversial due to her defence of the Islamic world's outrage against Salman Rushdie.*

*The narration of her lifelong reverence of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari written in the Preface to the Book "The Classics of Western Spirituality" published by the Paulist Press is perhaps the most powerful and eloquently expressed piece on the revered saint. It is a matter of great honour for Ansaris of Yusufpur to have such an*

*exalted personage in their lineage. At the same time, it reminds us of our responsibility to conduct our lives in the light of the guidelines provided to us by our ancestors so that we may prove their worthy successors*

*Excerpt from Ibn 'Ata' Illah / Kwaja Abdullah Ansari (The Book of Wisdom / Intimate Conversations). Translated by Victor Danner and Wheeler M. Thackston, Preface by AnneMarie Schimmel. Copyright © 1978 by the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle in the State of New York. Paulist Press, Inc., Mahwah, NJ. Reprinted by permission of Paulist Press, Inc. [www.paulistpress.com](http://www.paulistpress.com)*

It was a night of despair, a cold October night, 1945, in Germany. We were sitting in a dirty railway station, lucky to have found at least one place where to spend the night after long and uncomfortable travelling. People around me tried to sleep, or talked about the horrors of the war, of imprisonment, of hunger. . . . I took from my coat's pocket a small book that had survived wartime Berlin, deportation, and internment, and had given me unending consolation during those years.

*What use has he of his soul who has known You?  
What use has he of offspring and family?*

Thus said Abdullah Ansari, in his Munajat, which I had found in the Berlin print of 1924, sometime during the

war. Once more I delved into its depths, scribbled some rhyming translations of its pithy sayings and verses between the lines, and was carried away from the "world" in its ugliest aspects into the realm of peace:

*O Allah,*

*Those who labour for wages are content with You,  
but those who know You are indifferent to past and  
future.*

For some precious moments I felt the proximity of Allah whom the mystics have always invoked in hope and fear; who was their beloved and the final goal of their quest. Thirty years later I took the small book to Herat to thank Ansari for the help his work had given me. Indeed, Ansari's Munajat can be prayed even today, the artistic quality of the Persian rhyming prose and the inserted quatrains notwithstanding. The reader encounters here the wisdom of a searching and suffering man, who pours out his feelings in the presence of the Lord like little sighs, for the rhythm of these prayers, is like breathing in its constant change of contraction and expansion.

*Annemarie Schimmel*

15  
DEFINITION OF A DARVAISH  
AS PER  
KHWAJA ABDULLAH ANSARI



To be a Darvaish means to be a lump of sifted earth with a little water sprinkled on top, neither hurting the feet nor scattering a trail of dust behind.

What is being a Darvaish?

It is unpainted exterior and an interior without strife.

SELECTIONS FROM MUNAJAT NAMA  
(LITANIES, OR INTIMATE  
CONVERSATIONS WITH ALLAH)

BY  
KHWAJA ABDULLAH ANSARI

O Allah,

When you brand a heart with your love,  
You scatter its heap of being to the winds of  
nonexistence.

O Allah, Whosoever comes to know you  
And raises the banner of your love  
Will cast off all that is other than you

O Allah,

Life in my body pulsates only for thee  
My heart beats in resignation to thy will.  
If on my dust a tuft of grass were to grow,  
Every blade would tremble with my devotion for thee.

O Allah,

Even though I am not very  
Still I have no one but you

O Allah,

There is no limit to your grace.  
There is no tongue capable of uttering thanks to you.

O Allah,  
Ask us not what we have produced  
that we should not be perplexed!  
Ask us not what we have done  
that we should not be disgraced!

O Allah,  
Seek not from us obedience to you,  
for we are not capable.  
Speak not of our worthiness of you,

O Allah,  
What use has he of his soul who has known you?  
What use has he of offspring and family?  
When you drive one mad,  
You give him both this world and the next:  
What use has the madman for this world or the next?

O Allah,  
You commanded us to obey you  
and then prevented us from doing so.  
You forbade us to disobey you  
and then made us disobedient.  
You who are slow to anger and swift to make amends,  
You have raised the banner of imperfection over our  
heads.

O Allah,  
You summon us down a path in which are pitfalls

If I fall into a pit, what fault is it of my companions?

O Allah,

What is it to have mercy on the obedient?

What is the value of mercy when it extends to everyone?

O Allah,

If Satan taught man evil,

who provided him with the wheat?

O Allah,

You are ever-present. Why then should I search?

You are ever-mindful. What then should I say?

O Allah,

Although Heaven is bright and beautiful beyond  
compare,

without the vision of you it is painful and searing.

Although musk is sweet-scented,

it has not the life-giving breath of your odour.

A beautiful and pleasant station is Paradise,

but it has not the splendour of your lane.

O Allah,

If I devote but a moment to you,

how then could I fancy houris and mansions in Paradise?

O Allah,

Beauty is yours alone:

All else is hideous.



Ascetics are given Heaven as a wage.

O Allah,

Everyone fears you,  
But Abdullah fears himself,  
for all that comes of you is good,  
But what comes of Abdullah, bad.

O Allah,

Others are intoxicated by wine:  
I am intoxicated by the cupbearer.  
Their intoxication is ephemeral,  
but mine abides forever.

O Allah,

I am intoxicated by you.  
I am free from the draught and goblet.  
I am your bird. I am free of the grain and the snare.  
You are what I seek in the Kaaba and the idol-temple  
Otherwise, I am free of both these states.

O Allah,

You cast pearls of purity into Adam's lap.  
You smeared the dust of rebellion on Satan's brow.  
These two natures you mingled together.  
We humbly confess that we have done wrong.  
Blame us not!  
It was you who stirred up the dust of temptation!

O Allah,

For a long time I sought you and found myself.

Now I seek myself and find you.  
You were stealthily apparent, and I unaware.  
You were hidden in my breast, and I unaware.  
To the exclusion of all the world I sought you openly.  
You were the whole world, and I was unaware.

O Allah,  
I am aware of my own inability,  
I bear witness to my own helplessness.  
All will is yours. What can I will?  
I want not eternal life from you,  
I want not the good things of this life,  
I want not my heart's desire or my soul's repose.  
What I desire of you is whatever your pleasure is.

O Allah,  
When you had the flame of separation,  
why did you kindle the fire of hell?

O Allah,  
To sin in the face of your generosity is contemptible  
because your generosity is eternal  
and sin is of the moment.

O Allah,  
What grace is this that you have bestowed on your  
friends?  
Whoever recognizes you finds them,  
and whoever finds you recognizes them.

O Allah,  
If you wish to burn Abdullah,  
Then it will take another hell to consume him.  
If you wish to soothe him,  
it will take another Heaven to give him rest.

O Allah,  
I am annoyed by those acts of obedience  
that cause me to be proud.  
Happy that disobedience that brings me to my knees.

O Allah,  
The rose of Heaven is a thorn in the feet of mystics.  
What cares he for Heaven who is searching for you?

O Allah,  
You exist. I exist not.  
Can that which exists not demand something  
from that which exists?  
Who am I to do such a thing?

O Allah,  
Though I may be an offender,  
I am a Muslim.  
If I am a sinner,  
I am regretful.  
If you want to punish me,  
I'll obey your command.  
If you have mercy,  
I deserve it.

O Allah,  
If the pure must beg forgiveness,  
what must the impure have to do?  
There where the eagle will be overturned,  
Contemplate how the owl will be.

O Allah,  
Your glorious Book is a keepsake from you.  
Since you are present therein,  
what need is there of a memento?

O Allah,  
Everybody fears the day of retribution,  
But Abdullah fears the day of pre-eternity  
Because what you decreed in the beginning  
Will never be changed in the end.

O Allah,  
You have said that you are generous.  
Therein lie all our hopes.  
Since you have said that you are merciful,  
we are forbidden to be despondent.

O Allah,  
If I have not been a friend,  
I have not been an enemy either.  
Although I persist in sinning,  
still I confess your oneness.  
No matter how much you take away from me,  
I take nothing away from you.

O Allah,  
In this world the disobedience we do  
makes your beloved Muhammad sad  
and your enemy Iblis happy.  
If you torment us at the Resurrection,  
again your beloved will be sad  
and your enemy happy.

O Allah,  
Don't give your enemy two occasions for happiness  
and your beloved two occasions for sorrow.

O Allah,  
You made Creation gratis.  
You provided sustenance gratis.  
Have mercy on us gratis:  
You are Allah, not a merchant!

O Allah,  
Bu-Jahl comes from the Kaaba,  
and Abraham from the idol temple.  
Everything depends upon your favour:  
The rest is just pretext.  
If I am not worthy of the trust,  
on the first day you knew what I was like.  
Forgive my sorrowful heart,  
for humanity is torment in my religion.  
With your eternal knowledge you me.

You what you were buying, in spite of my faults.

You and your knowledge.

Me and my faults.

Don't send back what you once approved.

O Allah,

Of your grace give Abdullah wine,  
that his vision be not clouded by his intellect.

O Allah,

What value have I to be worthy of you?

If you will, chastise me.

If you will, forgive me.

You hold the key: How should I open the door?

O Allah,

What am I to do with Paradise?

What games am I to play with the houris?

Give me an eye to make a Paradise of my every glance.

O Allah,

What I, a mere beggar, desire of you  
is more than a thousand kings could wish.

Everyone has a request to make of you,  
but I have come to ask you for yourself.

O Lord,

Provide me with repentance.

Provide me with obedience worthy of you.

Before I finish my labour in this world,

provide me with freedom  
from this world and the next.

O Paradise,  
I am not concerned with you: Don't be so long-winded!

O Hell,  
I am not afraid of you: Don't tell me about yourself!

If one abandons the rigor of knowledge  
for the delights of the black-eyed "houris",  
the purity of his knowledge is shattered.

If you walk on water, you are wet.  
If you fly in the air, you are a fly.  
Fall in love in order to be somebody!  
Fasting to endurance is a way to save on food.  
Vigil and prayer is a labour for old women.  
The pilgrimage is an occasion for tourism.  
To distribute bread in alms is something for  
philanthropists:

Fall in love:  
That is doing something!

Knowledge is a shoreless ocean  
in which the knower's soul is a signpost.

Hallaj said, "I am Allah" and crowned the gallows.  
Abdullah said, "Allah" and was crowned.  
What Hallaj said, I too have said

He said it aloud.

I, silently

He who knows three things is saved from three things:

Who knows that the Creator made no mistakes at  
Creation

is saved from cavilling.

Who knows that He made no favouritism in allotting  
fortune

is saved from jealousy.

Who knows of what he is created  
is saved from pride.

What grief does the humble have for his daily bread?

He who conceals his affair is given no less;

He who seeks openly is given no more

That which Allah has allotted neither increases one iota  
nor occurs one instant sooner.

Beginners have speech on their tongues.

The advanced have neither the power to speak

Nor the means to express.

Allah's favour comes unexpectedly,

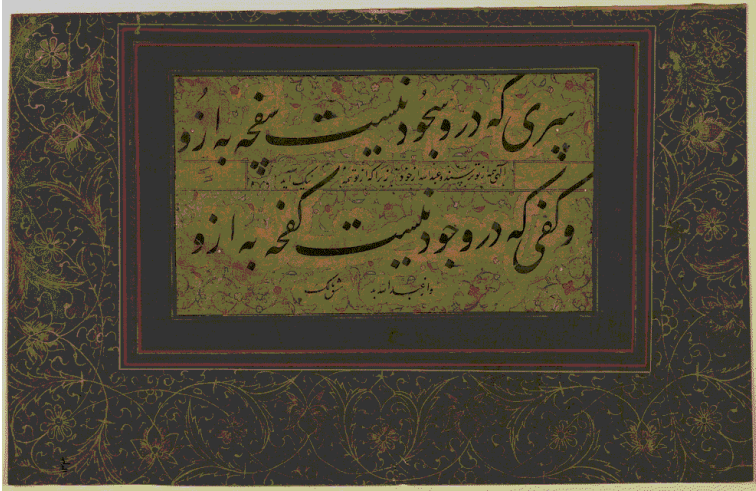
But only to an alert heart.

Put not your hope in people,

for you will be wounded.

Put your hope in Allah  
that you may be delivered.

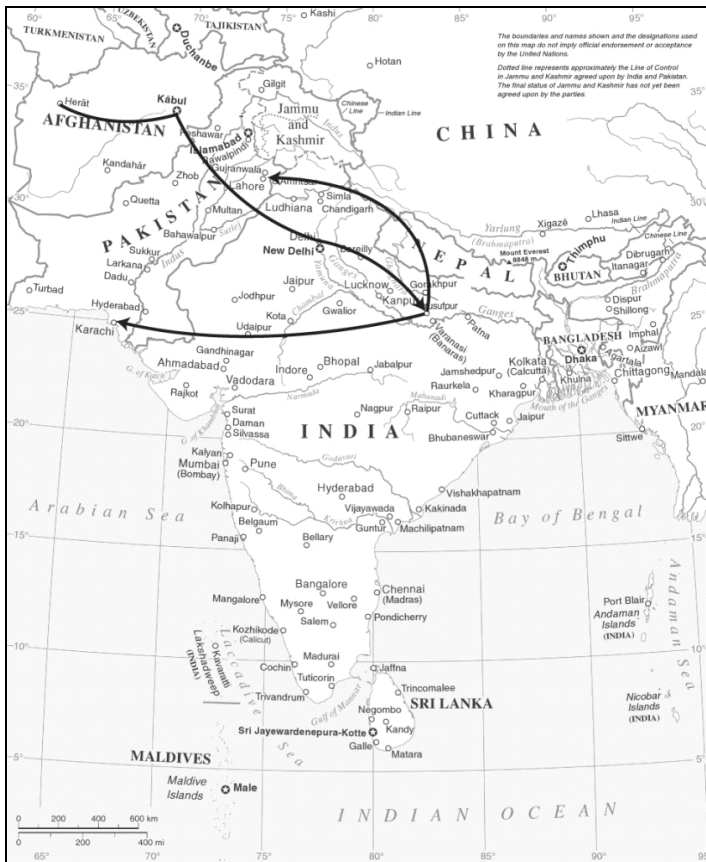




CALLIGRAPHIC EXAMPLE OF  
MUNAJAT NAMA



KHWAJA ABDULLAH ANSARI LOST  
IN MUNAJAT



**MAP SHOWING MOVE OF ANСАРIS  
FROM HERAT TO INDIA & PAKISTAN**

## MOVE OF ANSARIS TO INDIA

The move of Ansaris from Herat to India had all the elements of adventurism, gallantry, quest for the unknown, mastery over dispensation of justice, deep rooted faith in destiny and an undying zeal and passion for spreading Islam as the Raison d'etre for life. Hence, when Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur, founder of the Mughal dynasty decided to conquer India, Ansaris joined him in making his dream come true.

Here it would be of interest to write a few words about Babar.

He was the son of Sheikh Umar Mirza, ruler of Farghana, and was born in 1483 CE.

Not content with ruling over the small kingdom of Farghana, he attacked Samarkand. In the attempt to capture Samarkand he even lost Farghana.

Loss of Farghana made him a wanderer. His narration of going from place to place with his loyal band of soldiers as written in the Tuzk-e-Babri makes absorbing reading. It was during this Period that he came to Kabul and captured it. He had also heard of the rich land called Hindustan and remembered his grandfather Taimoor's invasion of Hind. He focussed his attention on it, and found an opportunity when Daulat Khan, governor of

Punjab, invited him to attack and promised to help him against Ibrahim Lodi. This led to the famous First Battle of Panipat, fought in 1526 CE.

Even though the battle lasted for only a few hours, Ibrahim Lodhi was killed and Babur emerged victorious, thereafter conquering most of India.

The generations of the following descendants of Khawaja Abdullah Ansari's came to India during different times and led to formation of the following branches of the family in India:

Khwaja Jabir – Ancestor - Ansaris of Farangi Mahal.

Khwaja Abdurrahman – Ancestor - Ansaris of Yusufpur.

Khawja Hashim Buzurg –Ancestor - Ansaris of Aligarh.

Qazi Mohd Yusuf-Ancestor - Ansaris of Saharanpur

Qazi Mohd Naimat- Ancestor - Ansaris of Kakori.

Descendants of Khwaja Abdurrahman, the ancestor of Ansaris of Yusufpur, came to India in two groups, as follows:

Khwaja Alauddin and Khwaja Badruddin came to India during the period of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq and settled in Dehli. Of these two, Khwaja Badruddin accompanied Amir Syed Masood Ghazi and came to the area to subdue Raja Mandehta. A brief narration of the events that led to this move of Ansaris to the general area of Mohammedabad, some two hundred years prior to the arrival of the second batch, is as follows:

In 1330 CE, when Sultan Mohammed Sani bin Tughlaq became King and ascended the throne of Delhi, he appointed Syed Masud as his Minister (Moqarrib). Mohammed Tughlaq left for Deccan after appointing Firoz Shah Tughlaq, his cousin, as his deputy at Delhi. At that time Raj Mandhata was the ruler of Kashtut (Kathaut), a place near Ghazipur (Now Ghauspur or Ghaus-ul-Azampur.). The Raja was hostile to the Delhi kingdom. Syed Masud Al-Husaini, along with his seven sons and 40 comrades left Delhi and came to Ghazipur as per the command of King Firoz Shah. The mission was to rescue a young unmarried girl from the captivity of Raja Mandhata. A fierce battle took place and the Raja was defeated. Syed Masud was appointed as ruler and administrator of the place. He was honoured with the title of 'Ghazi' by the king Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Syed Masud founded a new city in 1330 AD. It was called Ghazipur. He died on 31.03.1366 CE and is buried in Ghazipur. His grave is in Mohalla Harishankari. His son, Syed Raje, who was killed while fighting the army of Raja's nephew in 1330 C.E, is also buried there. In Ghazipur, one Mohalla is known as "Syedwara" and a riverbank is called Masudi Ghat. He had seven sons and distributed the areas under his control among his sons for administrative convenience and settled himself in Ghazipur city. His descendants were later called 'Syeds of

Ghazipur' as described in the research work of S. M. Taqi Husaini's genealogical tree of Syed Masud Al-Husaini.

Khwaja Badruddin, an ancestor of Ansaris of Yusufpur, accompanied Syed Masud Al-Husaini and fought the battle. However, after staying in the area for some time, he returned to Dehli.

Khwaja Mobin titled Abul-Hameed Saaduddin Zainuddin alias Mitthan along with his brothers Khwaja Najmuddin Siraj and Khwaja Muhammad Hayat alias Haji Kamil came to Panipat with Babur in 1526. Khwaja Najmuddin Siraj and his brother were among Babur's court. Ghazipur Gazetteer page 99 mixed the two arrivals by stating that "*the first was appointed Qazi of the pargana by Muhammad bin Tughlaq*". Khwaja Najmuddin Siraj actually came to India in the period of Babar, and not in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughlaq.

Why and how Khwaja Najmuddin Siraj was appointed Qazi (equivalent to Chief Justice) of Mohammedabad Ghazipur Siraj by Humayun In 1540 needs to be explained in some detail.

Sheikh Jamal Ahmed Makki was a great scholar and spiritual luminary in the times of Mughals. He resided in Rasoolpur Jamal of Mohammedabad Pargana and his lineage went up to Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique (RA. He was a venerated religious scholar, spiritual guide and Master. His disciples ran in to thousands. He was also

held in high esteem by the Mughals. His presence and teachings were the main reason for rapid spread of Islam in the area during the reign of the first three Mughal emperors, Babar, Humayun and Akbar. He was thought of as a beacon of light in the darkness prevailing around.

Sheikh Jamal was a disciple of Sheikh Abdul Quddoos Gangohi. After learning all that was to know about the visible branches of Islamic education, he strove to find his guide to take him to the zenith of spiritual accomplishment. One night he dreamt that to do so, he must become a disciple of Sheikh Muhammad Mallanwi. Thus, he asked his father to take him to Sheikh Mallanwi. His father took him to Dehli where Sheikh Mallanwi resided. The revered Sheikh, having already received the divine message, was waiting for him, and received him with open arms. One day the Sheikh told Sheikh Jamal that his time to depart from the world had come. He instructed him to join the army of Humayun and go and settle where ever he liked and spread the message of Islam.

Sheikh Jamal chose Ghazipur as the place to settle, joined Humayun's army and left on the expedition to subdue Nasir Khan Lohani, the ruler of Ghazipur. Passing through Ghazipur he reached Muhammadabad Parhar Bari. He liked the place and requested the king to let him stay at that place. The King allowed him to do so.



At that time, the area was surrounded by jungle and was inhabited by aboriginal tribes such as Seori, Cheero and Rajbhar. As per the history of Rasoolpur Jamal, some of these tribes accepted Islam and lived peacefully. However, a number of them continued in their old ways. They used to rob the travellers passing by, and, on resistance, killed them. It was a time of great uncertainty and chaos. Sheikh Jamal tried to convince them to mend their ways; but to no avail. Finally, and as a last resort, he wrote a letter to the King Humayun as follows:

*“This area now known as Mohammedabad Parhar Bari parganah is steeped in ignorance and infidelity. There is nobody here who could make these inhabitants follow the right path without the use of sword. To rectify this situation we need a strong and powerful ruler who can crush them”.*

On receipt of Sheikh Jamal’s letter, the King despatched Khwaja Najmuddin Siraj Ansari as the Qazi of the area and Mirza Adil Baig as Minister of Finance. After a bloody battle, they were successful in crushing the miscreants. The King rewarded the two with official letters of appointment and Jageers (Large tracts of land). These two distinguished souls established a number of places such as Adilabad and Qazipur Siraj. Simultaneously, Jamalpur was named after Sheikh Jamal.

Thus, the descendants of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, having arrived in two batches, first during the reign of Muhammed bin Tughlaq, and then with the army of the Mughal King Zaheeruddin Babar, finally settled in the area generally called Mohammedabad and initiated the process of spreading Islam and establishing themselves as the icons of religion, knowledge, justice and medicine in and around that part of India. Wilton Oldham, in his Memoirs, acknowledges the superior mental capabilities and accomplishments of Ansaris in the following words:

*“The Sadeekie Sheikhs of Puhetia in the Ghazeepoor, and the Ansaree Sheikhs of Yusoofpoor in the Mahomedabad Pergunnah, surpass even their neighbours the Syuds in mental energy and ability. A great number of the villages of the Sheikhs have passed away from their possession”.*

*Historical & Statistical Memoir of the Ghazeepoor District, Wilton Oldham, Northwest Provinces, India 1909.*

Khwaja Najmuddin Siraj, who was the Qazi of the entire area called Qazipur Siraj, had no male issue. At the same time, his brother Khwaja Mobin alias Mitthan had married a lady from the Ansari family that had arrived with the first batch and had settled at Saiket, Shikohabad. He was blessed with a son who was named Khwaja Hameeduddin Saadullah Alias Qazi Yusuf. Qazi

Najmuddin Siraj married his daughter Fatima Bibi to Qazi Yusuf.

After the death of Khwaja Najmuddin Siraj, Qazi Yusuf was appointed Qazi by Akbar in 968H/1568CE. Qazi Yusuf is known as the ancestor of Ansaris of Yusufpur. His son Qazi Ahmed enhanced the area to the level of parganah and named it Yusufpur after him in 1593.

Another significant event that merits record was the death of Fatima Bibi, daughter of Qazi Najmuddin Siraj and wife of Qazi Yusuf. After her death, Qazi Yusuf proposed to marry a daughter of Sheikh Jamal, as it was a matter of great honour to be son-in-law of the most revered spiritual luminary Sheikh Jamal. Keeping in view the lineage of Qazi Yusuf, Sheikh Jamal kindly accepted the proposal and thus his daughter Aisha Bibi was married to Qazi Yusuf, binding the two Sheikh families through matrimony.

Having established Yusufpur, Ansaris continued to excel in the fields they were known for, i.e. serving the cause of Islam, medicine and justice . They produced outstanding luminaries in all of these fields such as Hakeem Nabeena Ansari, perhaps the most renowned physician of India of his times, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, President of Congress, Khilafat Movement and Muslim League, Qazi Malik Ansari, Qazi Subhanullah Ansari, Qazi Khurshid-ul-Haq Ansari and Qazi Farid-ul-Haq Ansari, etc.

Amongst the current prominent figures of the Ansaris of Yusufpur, Mohammed Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India and Ex-Vice Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University are noteworthy. These stalwarts who stole the thunder in yester years will be covered in detail in the pages that follow.

The journey that began in Yemen some four thousand years ago meandered through Yemen, Yathrib, Istanbul and Herat, finally reaching Yusufpur. Today, as the children of the Ansaris of Yusufpur have spread around the globe, they, through this book, will come to know more about their heritage, and if they endeavour to emulate their ancestors to any extent, the purpose of writing this book will have been achieved.

AN ANCESTRAL HOME OF THE ANSARIS OF YUSUFPUR (DR. ANSARI  
WAS BORN HERE)





HAKIM NABINA ANSARI

## HAKIM NABINA ANSARI UNMATCHED VISION

*Note: The material produced in this chapter covering Hakim Nabina Ansari, the legendary figure in eastern medicine, has been translated from the book “Hakim Nabina Ansari - Mujammil Halaat-e-Zindagi” written by his son Hakim Abdul Ghani Ansari. Had it not been written, most of the history of this great stalwart of the family would have been lost. This also signifies the need and importance of writing about our elders for posterity.*

Hakim Abdul Wahab Ansari was born in 1859 in a well-known family of Sufi Shaikhs of Yusufpur, District Ghazipur in India. His father, Abdul Rahman Ansari was an icon of piety and knowledge and had reached an advanced stage of gnosis. His uncle Haji Maulvi Abdul Ghafur Ansari was also a well-known Sufi Shaikh of the area whose followers and disciples ran in to thousands. Coming from such an exalted line of religious luminaries and being a descendant of Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA), the companion of Rasulullah (SAW) and Hazrat Khwaja Abdullah Ansari (RA), Abdul Wahab opened his eyes in the world blessed with an enlightened soul who perhaps already knew what was to be known.

### Childhood

That he was an exceptional person was identified, by those who could see beyond the obvious, as one of those souls who arrive in the World to defy the norm, and become an exception. As a child, his head was extraordinarily large. Rather than playing with other children, young Abdul Wahab preferred to spend his time alone, wandering in the vast old buildings of his ancestors, pondering on matters only known to Allah and him. A known ascetic of those times, Kamal Lakkhar Shah, who was considered to be the *Qutub* of his times, used to display his affection for young Abdul Wahab by picking him up and saying” He is a king, a real king”. He also used to draw lines on his face with a coal saying” I have stuffed knowledge in each line”. Thus, a combination of outstanding lineage and the affectionate attention of such accomplished saints prepared Abdul Wahab to arrive on the stage of the world and do what he was destined to do in a manner that would leave indelible marks on the history of the Sub-Continent.

## **Education**

Abdul Wahab memorized holy Quran at the young age of nine years. He was blessed with the best-in-class teachers. Maulana Inayat Hussain Chiriyakoti, the renowned teacher of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Maulvi Farooq, teacher of Allama Shibli Nomani, taught him Arabic and Persian. Thereafter, he joined the earliest batch of students at Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband and



concentrated his efforts on learning from the distinguished teachers of that pioneer institution, a center of excellence for Islamic learning formed to bring about renaissance in the Muslims of India.

Two years prior to completion of his education at Deoband, Abdul Wahab went to Yusufpur on vacation. There, he was afflicted with Small Pox. By the time he recovered, he had lost his vision. He was Nineteen years old at that time.

Undeterred by this severe handicap, he resolved to complete his education in spite of suggestions to give it up due to his disability. He consoled those close to him by saying “Allah has bestowed me with a memory and mind that does not need to see things. Whatever I hear or feel, I remember”. I will, Insha Allah, reach the level destined for me in spite of the handicap and befitting the traditions and expectations of the family adorned with people of outstanding merit and accomplishments.

Equipped with this indefatigable attitude, he continued his studies and achieved expertise even in subjects where vision was most essentially required, such as Mathematics, Geometry and Physics. On his graduation, his teacher Maulana Muhammad Yaqoob said “Your ancestor Khwaja Abdullah Ansari remembered the entire Hadith by heart. You should also do the same. It was a mark of his phenomenal memory and untiring nature

that as advised by his teacher, he memorized *Saha Sitta*, the six volumes of authentic Hadith, i.e. Bukhari, Ahmed, Muslim, Ibn-e-Maja, Dawood, Nisai and Tirmidhi. Thus, he not only became a Hafiz-e-Quran, but also a Hafiz-e-Hadith.

### **Pursuit of the ultimate Truth (Irfan)**

During his stay at Darul Uloom Deoband, Abdul Wahab Ansari had given his hand in *Bait (Oath of Allegiance)* to his father's Shaikh, the venerated Shaikh Akhund Shah Abdulaziz. After his demise, he took *Bait* with Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi, a Shaikh of the Chishtia, Sabria order. In his pursuit of Sufi excellence, he revered and loved his Shaikh in a matchless devotion. Only one example will be sufficient to provide a glimpse of the intensity of his devotion and dedication.

He used to start his weekly journey to meet his Shaikh from Darul Uloom Deoband to Gangoh Sharif every Thursday after Asr prayers. It was a distance of thirty miles. Blind Abdul Wahab, intoxicated with the love and devotion of his Shaikh, used to cover this distance on foot. The way passed through wilderness and jungle, and was fraught with dangers even for an able bodied person, what to talk of a blind man. He used to walk as much as he could, and then rested at night, under a tree. To sleep, he used a wooden, folding low bed that he had designed himself. The very thought of spending a night in the

jungle inhabited by wild animals including lions was enough to make anyone abandon the idea. However, Abdul Wahab slept peacefully, totally oblivious to all dangers. Wild animals did not come close to him. He used to sleep till *Tahhajud* (a special non-obligatory prayer known to bring a person very close to his Creator). On waking up he used to offer Fajr prayers and started his journey again. By sunrise he would reach his Shaikh. He spent time serving him, offered Jumma (Friday) prayers with him, and then started the journey back to Darul Uloom again, to reach the seminary by Saturday morning.

Can one think of a similar example of devotion and dedication? It would be hard. His Shaikh also loved him dearly and expressed it in the following words “It is because of the love and affection of Abdul Wahab that I am alive today. Otherwise I would have departed long ago”.

### **Years of Wandering**

After teaching at the Darul Uloom for two years, Abdul Wahab Ansari, following tradition of all seekers of the ultimate truth, and perhaps on receiving a divine signal, left home all alone to tour and visit men of religious significance. He visited most known clerics, mystics and ascetics of that period in different parts of India and benefitted from their blessings. During his travels, he

also met Maulana Fazlur Rahman Ganj Muradabadi (RA) He narrates the meeting in the following words:

“Early in the morning I, accompanied by a person named Imam Din, visited the Masjid where the revered saint used to meet people. There was a huge crowd around him. Suddenly, he addressed me and asked me the reason of my visit. I replied “After conversion to Islam, delegation upon delegation used to come to Madinah-e-Munawwara to visit Rasulullah (SAW) and be blessed by seeing him (Ziarat). You and personages like you are the successors of Rasulullah (SAW). Alhamdolillah I have already become a Muslim, as I have done *bait* of my Shaikh. Thus, the purpose of visiting you is only to please Allah”.

Upon hearing this, the revered saint let out an involuntary and soulful cry and then addressed those around him “Allah, Allah. Even in this day and age there are seekers of the ultimate truth who visit *Faqirs* only for the sake of Allah. These days, everybody who comes here has a need. One wants a child, the other to win a court case, or some other worldly desire. He then went in to a trance like state. It seemed that he was looking in to the future and seeing what was not visible to the ordinary. He returned to his senses with a jolt and said “Dear, you are a very famous Hakim. Could you check my pulse? And lo and behold, you are a perfect *Muhaddis* as well. The *Noor* of Hadith is spreading all around. You teach

Hadith as well. Dear Hakim Abdul Wahab, I am holding a lot of things in trust for you. Thus he blessed him with a number of spiritual powers and qualities that he had kept for him”.

### **Excellence and achievements in Medicine**

Hakim Nabina Ansari learnt his medical and diagnostic skills from elite physicians in Dehli and Lucknow. He soon mastered the field and acquired exceptional expertise in pulse reading as the primary method of diagnostics. Some of his Contemporaries and critics were of the opinion that his amazing diagnostic skills were due to his spiritual insight, and not because of his mastery of the profession of medicine. However, this impression was proved wrong through the books he wrote on the subject that detailed the scientific basis of his methods of diagnosis and treatment. He authored a book in Urdu, titled “Asrar-e-Sharyaniya” (Secrets of the Pulse). In that treatise he succinctly described the diagnostic clues that a physician could learn in examining the pulse and arriving at correct identification of ailments. The book also contained recipes of Unani medicines used in his practice and the scientific basis for the use and benefits of different ingredients.

Hakim Abdul Wahab Ansari also authored “Qarabadin Luqmaniya” (Pharmacopeia Luqmaniya), in Persian, consisting of six huge volumes. It was a compilation of all Unani medicinal recipes. Unfortunately it was not published otherwise it would have been a great contribution in medical therapeutics and would have served as the encyclopaedia of the Unani Medicine.

The foregoing will prove amply prove beyond doubt his grasp and mastery over diagnostics through Pulse Reading and effective treatment of ailments using the natural ingredients based Unani medicines.

Abdul Wahab moved from Dehli to Hyderabad Deccan State on instructions of his Shaikh and stayed there for forty five years. He practiced medicine in the day and taught Hadith after Asr prayers. A number of notables of Hyderabad, who numbered in thousands, were his students and were spread over all parts of the Islamic empire such as Afghanistan, Iran, Arabia, Iraq, Kenya, East Africa etc. Apart from teaching Hadith, he was always surrounded by students of medicine who learnt eastern medicine (Hikmat) and pulse reading from him.

Another unique feature of his clinic was that in spite of the fact that he was royal physician to the Nizam of Hyderabad and over two dozen other Nawabs and Maharajahs, everybody who came was dealt with similarly when it came to treatment. Expensive

medicines which cost huge amounts to make and were paid for heavily by the rich were given to the poor free of cost. Nobody was sent back because he could not afford the treatment.

Nawab Mehboob Ali Khan, the ruler of Hyderabad state treated him with extreme reverence. Treatment of all members of the royal family was carried out by him. The Nizam used to take him by hand to the palaces. In the entrance beyond which nobody could enter without the specified headgear and gloves, he was exempt from all such protocols.

During his stay in Hyderabad he treated the mother of Nizam for cancer. She had been given twelve hours to live by leading doctors. However, after only one week of treatment, she recovered fully. It was quite un-heard of in those days for a cancer patient to survive. It happened at the hands of the Messiah of his times, Hakim Nabeena Ansari.

Nizam of Hyderabad had gifted a large plot of land in the centre of old city to Hakim Nabina Ansari where upon he built a Commercial Centre comprising of Shops named “Madina Bazar”. This property was held in trust and the entire rental income was sent to Harmain Shareefain (the two holiest cities of Makkah and Madina) for helping the needy pilgrims. Under a different ownership Madina Bazar still exists in Hyderabad.

In 1938 the 7th Nizam of Hyderabad established first ever full- fledged Unani Hospital named 'Saddar Shifa Khana' (Next to Hyderabad's famous landmark "Char Minar" with in-patient wards and Out-Patient clinics. Hakim Nabina Ansari was appointed as the first Superintending Officer of that hospital by Royal Decree. There is a marble plaque in Persian at the entrance of that hospital which still exists and presents the sentiments of appreciation by the Nizam of Hyderabad for Hakim Nabina Ansari. English translation of the plaque is:

*"We recognize high calibre of Hakim Nabina who has unparalleled excellence in diagnosis by pulse and his excellent method of treatment of diseases".*

He moved from Hyderabad to Bombay after the death of the Nizam, Mir Mehboob Ali Khan and then to Poona. However, climatic conditions of the two cities did not suit him. Thereafter, he moved to Dehli and settled there. The climate as well as the refined environment of Dehli suited him well and he made it home. Being the capital of India, Dehli attracted luminaries from all fields and made it conducive for development and growth of movements towards the betterment of mankind and Muslims. This outstanding physician of his time, whose presence had so far benefitted Hyderabad Deccan and parts of Southern India, began to cure the entire Indian Subcontinent and beyond. Patients from Bengal, Behar,



Bombay, Punjab, Multan, Herat, Afghanistan Kashghar, and Bukhara started coming over to Dehli for treatment. His clinic presented the look of India's "Who's Who" of those times. Members of Viceroy's Executive Governing Council, Ministers and Rulers of States visited him regularly for treatment. A number of prominent personalities such as Sir Taij Bahadur Sipro, who had visited Vienna, Paris, Berlin and London and had been declared incurable, fully recovered after his treatment. Dr. Sir Allama Iqbal, the Poet of the East, was suffering from kidney stones and was planning to go to Europe for surgery. After treatment of two weeks only, he fully recovered and his stones dissolved without operation.

According to some estimates, Hakim Nabeena Ansari's income was around six to seven thousand rupees per month. The average salary of a teacher in those days was Rs. 20. Thus, Mullah Vahidy in his famous book "*Mairay Zamanay Ki Dilli*" aptly wrote "Money did not come to Hakim Nabina Ansari's home. It rained on him".

However, displaying the sterling character qualities of Ansaris, he spent all of his life's earnings on a huge building in Knott Circle Palace that spanned the entire "F" block, Dehli, called "Tibbiya Manzil" and placed it in Trust (Waqf) for Madinah-e-Munawarra. He was aware of the presence of alcohol in the allopathic medicines and wished to cleanse Madinah and Makkah by replacing such medicines with eastern medicines made of only

Halal ingredients. His grand plan was to establish a Pan Islamic Medical training center in Madinah and train Hakims from all Muslim countries who would, after training, go back to their respective countries and convert the system of medicine there from Allopathic to Eastern system of medicine. A scheme of this magnitude needed huge amount of funds. However, he refused to seek donations and devoted his entire earnings for this purpose. With his own savings, he got Tibbiya Manzil constructed as an income generating project. This building was located in Connaught Circle Palace. At that time the cost of the building was around Rs. 250,000. Present day value of the building would be many hundred times more.

## **Haj**

Hakim Nabeena Ansari performed Haj in 1938. Being well known to the Saudi Royal family by virtue of being physician of His Royal Highness King Abdulaziz Al Saud, he was accorded a warm welcome. King Abdulaziz Al Saud sent a telegram to him stating “I am looking forward to your safe arrival in Jeddah”. He also ordered the Governor of Jeddah to personally receive him at the port. Thus the Governor went to the ship in official motor launch and brought him to the shore. Thereafter, he was accorded full Honours and protocol and was taken to Makkah in official entourage. King Abdulaziz Al Saud received him in Makkah. There, he delivered a

speech in the presence of all Ministers and heads of Islamic countries performing Haj that year. Text of his speech is as follows:

“Alhamdolillah, eight hundred million Muslims inhabit this earth today. However, nobody has ever thought of the fact that western medicines are alcohol and spirit based, whereas the Islamic system of medicine has been almost abandoned in Saudi Arabia as well as other Muslim Countries. Hakim Abdul Wahab Ansari is the first person of the Muslim Ummah who has thought of and executed a plan through his personal efforts and sacrifices which is unparalleled in these times. Alhamdolillah, affluent Muslims around the Globe continue to spend a portion of their wealth in the name of Allah. However, based on undeniable and confirmed reports I have been advised that in spite of his physical handicap and old age, Hakeem Abdul Wahab has dedicated his entire wealth in the shape of a building called “*Tibbiya Manzil*” in New Dehli whose income will be spent on establishment of a medical institution in Madinah to train doctors in Islamic Medicine and place them in the two holy cities to treat pilgrims free of cost. My government will continue to support his initiative to any extent possible. The financial resources of my government, as everybody knows, are limited and we have to levy import duty on materials brought in to the Country. However, I will exempt from duty, all

medicines and material imported for this noble deed. I have been hearing about the medical excellence of Hakim Abdul Wahab for some time now. I hereby declare him exempt from all visa and other regulatory requirements of my government. As long as he stays in Saudi Arabia, he will be treated a special guest of my Kingdom.

After the speech, His Royal Highness King Abdulaziz had his pulse checked by Hakim Nabeena Ansari. He was so impressed by the effectiveness of the medicines prescribed for him that he continued to use them even after the departure of Hakim Nabeena Ansari. In fact, only a week before his death Hakim Nabina had dispatched, for the third time, the annual supply of medicines for the King.

Hakim Nabeena Ansari had planned to get huge stocks of medicines prepared and then migrate to Madinah to serve the pilgrims. However, life did not give him enough time to do so and he departed for his permanent abode shortly after returning from Haj.

## **Demise**

In the Month of Rabi-ul-Awwal, 1360 Hijri (March 1941 CE) while he was going to perform Wudu for Zuhri prayers he was inflicted with heat stroke and became semi-conscious. However, even in this condition his fingers were moving on the rosary. On recovery, his wife

asked him as to how and why he was reciting something on rosary while he was unconscious. He disclosed to her that he used to be blessed with seeing Rasulullah (SAW) every week to ten days. However, after his visit to Madinah, he had the good fortune of seeing him every day. He further said that he was a slave of Rasulullah (SAW), who had given him the title of Shaikh Muhammad Saleh Abdul Wahab. How was it then possible that he would stop reciting Durood and Salam even when he was unconscious?

After recovering from heat stroke, Hakim Nabeena Ansari suffered from very high temperature. At that time, Dehli was under the spell of a heat wave and the temperature was around 117 degrees Celsius. His fever touched 106 degrees. His oldest son Hakim Abdul Hai suggested that after recovery they would move him to Hyderabad whose temperate climate would suit him more. He replied” However, I will leave on Sunday”. Hakeem Abdul Hai respectfully opined that Sunday was not a suitable day to travel. Monday would be a better day to commence the journey. He again replied” But I will leave on Sunday in any case”. On Sunday his temperature became normal. On Sunday night, he offered Isha prayers and went to sleep. He woke up at 2 a.m. for *Tahhajud* prayers as per his habit of sixty or seventy years. After the prayers he raised his hands in supplication for an unusually long period. At 2:30 a.m.

his son Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari checked his pulse and found it regular. At 3:30 a.m. while his hand was still moving on the rosary, he recited the name of Allah thrice and passed away peacefully. Inna Lillahe Wa Inna Ilaihe Rajaoon! He met his creator on 5<sup>th</sup> Rabi Awwal 1360 A.H. corresponding to Wednesday, 02 April 1941 C.E.

### **Spiritual Stature**

Due to the habit of hiding his true spiritual position, very few people knew his real place in the hierarchy of spiritualism. Most of those who met him took him to be a very pious and deeply religious person. However, those who observed him closely knew that he was perched on a lofty spiritual pedestal. During those times, a saintly ascetic named Kamil Nausha Mian alias Hafiz Nabeena lived in Dehli. He used to normally remain absolutely naked. However, in a week or so he used to visit Hakim Nabeena Ansari. At that time he used to hide his private parts with a handkerchief or some other fabric. He used to kiss Hakim Nabeena Ansari's hand, quietly go seven times around the *dewan* Hakim Nabeena Ansari sat on and then left quietly.

Hakim Nabina Ansari also knew his time of departure from this mortal World and the place of his burial. At the start of summer, his wife suggested that he was getting weaker and would not be able to put up with the heat of Dehli. She proposed that they move to

Hyderabad prior to the commencement of summer and from there they could depart for Saudi Arabia for Haj. He remained quiet. At her insistence he replied: "I will be going to my *Murshid* soon. If I go so far away, how am I going to reach him?"

This was taken to be his testament and his mortal remains were taken to Gangoh Sharif, a distance of approximately 137 miles from Dehli. Due to being busy in making arrangements for his last journey, and perhaps also because it was felt that if the people of Dehli found out that the body was being moved to Gangoh Sharif they would resist the move and would want him to be buried in Dehli, the news of his death was not made public. However, in spite of that, a huge crowd attended his funeral prayers at Tibbiya Manzil. Thereafter, the entourage left for Gangoh Sharif. Those who were part of the entourage stated that all along the route people had come out from their villages and had gathered on the roadside. The vehicle carrying his body was made to stop at seventeen to eighteen places for people to see him for the last time. It remained a mystery that in the absence of phone or telegraph who had spread the news and who had asked those people to travel from far and gather on the road side? It was nothing short of a miracle and a testimony to the elevated spiritual status of the departed soul.

Hakim Nabeena Ansari also knew the place he was going to be buried at. Prior to departure for Haj in 1935, accompanied by his two sons Hakim Abdul Hayee and Hakim Abdul Qadir, he visited Gangoh Sharif to pay homage at his *Murshid's* mausoleum. About fifteen steps short of the mausoleum, and at the corner of a Masjid that he had got built, there was a tree. He suddenly sat under that tree. His sons, knowing his lack of sight, mentioned that the Mazar was still fifteen steps away, and that he should proceed further to reach it. He did not reply, and started reciting something. On being asked to move again, he replied: "Please do not interfere in this matter. I have to stay here". The two sons did not insist any further.

When his mortal remains reached Gangoh Sharif, his sons were stunned to see that the grave had already been dug exactly at the same site where he had sat down under the tree that day.

It was also observed repeatedly that he used to sit under the open sky and recite Surah Al-Anaam when there was no chance of any rain. Suddenly dark clouds used to appear and heavy rain poured. He used to say that he had been specially permitted by his elders to perform this wazeefa. He never slept on a bed, and never slept without *Wudu*. He always sat, prayed and slept on a wooden platform. It was the same wooden platform (*Takht*) on



which he prayed his last *Tahajjud* prayer and then left for his eternal abode.

His love and devotion for Rasulullah (SAW) knew no bounds. One example is enough to provide a glimpse of his utter dedication and unfathomable devotion. While in Poona, he saw an eye surgeon who opined that as a result of small pox Hakim Nabeena Ansari had got blisters in the eyes that had hardened with time. If the hardened matter was removed, his vision would be restored. The surgeon performed the operation and when the bandage was removed, Hakim Nabeena saw the face of the doctor. However, the doctor immediately put the bandage back and made him lie on his back. He advised him not to move or try to get up.

At about the time of Isha prayers, Hakim Nabeena started to show signs of discomfort. On inquiring he said that he always did *Wudu* before the prayers. He was reminded of the instructions from the doctor and it was suggested that instead of *Wudu* he should do *Tayummum* and pray lying down. Hakim Nabeena Ansari was displeased with this suggestion. He said: You people are afraid that by moving I will lose my eyesight. Since half a century I have not slept without *Wudu* as I am often blessed with a visit by Rasulullah (SAW). Even if I had a thousand eyes I would sacrifice all of them on him. I do not care about eyes and eyesight. He then got up, performed *Wudu* as normal and then went to sleep.

He woke up after a while and told his wife: “I was blessed with sighting Rasulullah (SAW) in my dream”. He said: “You have sacrificed your eyes for me. I am holding them in trust. You do not need them. You will see through my eyes. You will undergo a little discomfort as well, for which I feel sad”. After this incident his eyes became infected and he suffered a lot of pain for about forty days. Thereafter, Rasulullah (SAW) appeared in his dream again and gave him the good news that his suffering was about to be over, and asked him to use a certain herbal ointment. As soon as it was applied, the severe pain and discomfort disappeared as if it was never there. However, he had lost his eyesight completely. Prior to the operation he could differentiate between night and day. Now even that was gone.

It goes without saying that Hakim Nabeena Ansari earned fame and fortune in this world and good deeds to accompany him on his last journey to meet his creator, Insha Allah, due to his impeccable and unmatched vision of life herein and hereafter. His devotion to the good of mankind, his spiritual greatness and his deep devotion to Rasulullah (SAW) make him a worthy successor of his ancestors. May Allah reward him for his good deeds and grant us the will and means to follow the shining path shown to us by him. Ameen!

19  
HAKEEM NABEENA ANSARI  
BY  
MULLAH VAHIDY DEHLAVI

*Note: Following is the English Translation of an article from “Mairay Zamanay ki Dilli” (Dilli of my Times) – By Mullah Vahidy Dehlavi, a well Known author in Urdu. It has been translated by Nighat Ansari Siddiqui, daughter of Masood Ahmed Ansari (late), who was a nephew of Hakeem Nabeena Ansari. Nighat resides in Florida, USA.*

As I endeavour to write about prominent personalities who lived in Old Dilli during my times, there were some, albeit a few, who chose Dilli as their abode but their ancestors belonged to another place. Most were inhabitants who had lived in Dilli for generations. Since the title of my book is ‘Dilli of my times’, I must present what I , and the notables I came across during that period. Hence, I should include even those who had adopted Dilli as their home and had lived there for a long time. Take, for instance, Hakeem Nabeena Ansari and his younger brother Dr. Ansari. Their adopted home was Dilli, and to this day their off springs live there; thus they deserve to be mentioned in this book. Similarly, what I outside Dilli does not belong in this book since it is

strictly about my life in Dilli. In any case, now I will pen a sketch of Hakeem Nabeena.

Hakeem Sahib came to Dilli from Hyderabad Deccan. His place of birth was on the borders of UP and Bihar, but he had lived in Hyderabad for a long time. I am unaware of his life in Hyderabad, but him closely in Dilli. His real name was Abdul Wahab Ansari. He was the older brother of Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari. He provided education to Dr. Ansari, and it was because of him that the Nawab of Hyderabad, Nizam Mehboob Ali Khan had paid for Dr. Ansari's education in Europe. Dr. Ansari regarded Hakeem Nabeena not as an older brother, but more of a father.

When Hakeem Nabeena came to Dilli, one of my sons was almost terminally ill. We had given up hope on him. Hazrat Khwaja Hassan Nizami mentioned his name and said, "Since Hakeem Nabeena has his clinic in Dilli, take your son to him". Khwaja Hassan Nizami knew him before hand, and on his recommendation, I took my son along with Khwaja sahib to his clinic. Hakeem sahib was busy in examining his patients while talking to Khwaja sahib at the same time. Amongst the patients present was Maulana Syed Zahoor Ahmed Wehshi. Khwaja sahib also introduced him to Hakeem Nabeena, and while Hakeem Nabeena had his fingers on the pulse of Maulana Wehshi, he continued his dialogue with Khwaja sahib, which made me wonder about the kind of

attention he paid to his patients if he talked to others and checked them at the same time. Hakeem sahib then moved Maulana Wehshi's wrist watch from the other hand, and checked his pulse, and started describing his condition in minute detail, to the extent that he mentioned that his colour had darkened because of his ailment. He did not ask him anything about his condition. Instead, he gave the entire description of his condition by concentrating on his pulse. It seemed like Hakeem Nabeena's eyes had moved to his fingertips.

After Wehshi sahib, he checked my son, and prescribed a medicine for him. The effect of that medicine was so miraculous that the child who had not taken any milk for the last 24 hours, improved right away. His appetite was restored and he recovered within a few days. Hakeem sahib was such a tremendous pulse reader that he could even recognize people he had not seen for months by merely checking their pulse.

Usually Blind people are more intelligent, with a sharper memory compared to regular people, but Hakeem Nabeena's intelligence, sharpness and memory was unmatched by even the standards of blind. He was blind. Despite that major handicap he studied Arabic, Persian and Religious studies. He then learned Eastern Medicine to become a Hakeem. He had memorized Quran, was extremely well read and well versed in Tasawwuf. It seemed like by depriving him of one faculty, Allah had

enhanced and blessed him many folds with all other faculties. He lived a healthy, prosperous and respectable life. He did not visit his patients normally, and in case he chose to, under special circumstances, he never charged them for the visit. Whenever he visited his rich patients out of town, he would charge One Thousand Rupees per day, which was a healthy return for his trip. This describes his work and professional life.

His religious side was so well etched in his daily life that each and every action reflected his unwavering, sincere and blind faith in Islam. His time after his medical practice was mostly devoted to Allah and other saints. Despite his Sufism, he was a strict, practicing Muslim, and was a graduate from The Deoband School of Religion.

The Municipal Committee of Dilli once suggested erecting a statue of Dr. Ansari. I recommended that this idea should be approved by his older brother Hakim Nabeena, who, I was sure, would not like it, and it was not worth doing something that would offend him. It was decided that Lala Desh Bundhoo would accompany me to Hakeem Nabeena. Hence, as soon as the meeting was over, we headed over to Hakeem Nabeena's place. Lala Bundhoo tried to convince him of the idea but he vehemently opposed it and said, "You can erect the statue, I will break it". Hakeem Nabeena commanded this enormous prestige and respect while Dr. Ansari and

Hakeem Ajmal Khan also reigned in the field of medicine in those days. His most famous treatment of Dr. Allama Iqbal and Lala Rajput Rai earned great recognition and fame all over India. Lala Rajput Rai was Dr. Ansari's patient, but when his disease could not be cured successfully, Dr. Ansari recommended him to consult Hakeem Nabeena, who successfully treated him and his health was fully restored.

Allama Iqbal had kidney stones. On recommendation of Sir Sikander Hayat, he was referred to see a famous British Surgeon in Kashmir. Dr. Iqbal mentioned his ailment to Khwaja Hassan Nizami, who suggested that he should see Hakeem Nabeena. Dr. Iqbal didn't like surgeries, so he decided to do so, and left for Dilli right away to see him.

Dr. Iqbal was suffering from intense kidney pains. Hence, Khwaja Sahib immediately took him to Hakeem Nabeena, whose medication gave him immediate relief. Within ten days he was pain free. The stones had dissolved and disappeared from the kidneys. After ten days Hakeem Nabeena opined that Dr. Iqbal could travel back to Lahore. He continued the medications given by Nabeena sahib for a couple of months and never experienced that problem again.

Hakeem Nabeena's method of treatment was unique. He always formulated his own medications. In the morning

every food was allowed, and the avoidance of foods was for the afternoons only. He himself only ate once before eleven o'clock in the morning and then started his day, and thereafter didn't eat anything the whole day. He charged handsomely from the rich patients, and treated poor free and gave them free medications as well. Once he formulated a medication for Nawab Mehboob Ali Khan, Nizam of Deccan, and charged him One hundred thousand Rupees (which was an enormous amount at the time). While reading the pulse of his patients, and talking to them he could assess their financial position and then charged them according to whatever they could afford.



## 20

# I AM LOOKING FOR HUBB-E-ROOH-UZ-ZAHAB

*Following is a translation from the book “Siratul Nabi Baad Az Wisalul Nabi (The life of Nabi (SAW) after his departure from the world)” Volume 1 Sixth Edition 1992 by Muhammad Abdul Majid Siddiqui Advocate, published by Ferozsons Limited.*

*It will provide a fair idea of the spiritual calibre of the revered Hakim. He was a chosen servant of our beloved last Prophet (SAW) and had the honour of his suggested prescription being approved by him. This, in our faith, is considered the height of achievement in our mortal lives.*

This dream was personally narrated to Abdul Majid Siddiqui by Al-Haj Ashraf Sabuhi who then included in his book mentioned above.

Al-Haj Syed Ali Ashraf Sabuhi (RA) was the father of Al-Haj Muhammed Ashraf Sabuhi. Syed Ali Ashraf Sabuhi was a very pious and devout Muslim. He was a long-time resident of Delhi and was related to Syed Jahangir Samnani (RA), a ranking spiritual luminary of his times. Syed Ali Ashraf Sabuhi was the follower and spiritual successor to Hazrat Shah Fazl-e-Rahman Ganj Muradabadi (RA).

In 1935 CE, Al-Haj Syed Ali Ashraf Sabuhi, accompanied by his son, left Dehli and went to Makkah-e- Mukarramah. After performing Haj, the two arrived in Madinah-e-Munawwara.

In those days, Maulana Abdul Baqi (Ansari) Farangi Maheli Lucknawi (RA) used to narrate and teach Hadith at the Masjid-e-Nabwi. Due to advanced age and weakness, it became difficult for him to continue doing so. Maulana Abdul Baqi RA mentioned to Syed Ali Ashraf Sabuhi that he wanted to continue teaching Hadith for whatever little life was left. He further added that because of weakness, it was difficult for him to even step out of the house. He requested Syed Ali Ashraf Sabuhi to get a medication to strengthen him from Hakim Nabeena Ansari so that he could continue his routine of teaching hadith till the last day of his life.

While Syed Ali Ashraf Sabuhi stayed back in Madinah al-Munawwara, he sent his son Ashraf Sabuhi to Delhi to bring the medicine.

On reaching Dehli, Muhammed Ashraf Sabuhi narrated everything to the Hakeem Nabeena Ansari (Hafiz Hakeem Abdul Wahab Ansari, elder brother of Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari). Hakim Nabeena gave a bottle of a medicine called “Hubb-e-Rooh-uz-Zahab” to him for Maulana Baqi Farangi Maheli. Ashraf Sabuhi

arranged transportation of medicine to Madinah-e-Munawwara.

Some 20-25 days thereafter, Hakim Abdul Wahab Ansari was blessed with the auspicious vision of the Beloved Prophet (SAW) in a dream. He saw that the Beloved Messenger of Allah (SAW) was looking for something in medicine trunk. At this, Hakim Nabeena Ansari asked: “Ya Rasool Allah (SAW); what are you looking for?” The Beloved Prophet of Allah (SAW) replied: “I am looking for Rooh-uz-Zahab.” At this, Hakim Nabeena replied: “It is finished.” The Beloved Prophet of Allah (SAW) ordered: “Prepare more and send it to Abdul Baqi.”

When Hakim Nabeena Ansari woke up, he was wondering how to send the medicine to Madinah-e-Munawwara, when a renowned business man of Delhi called Al-Haj Ali Jan arrived. Hakim Nabeena sought his help in locating a person who could take the medicine to Madinah. Al-Haj Ali Jan suggested the name of Muhammed Ashraf Sabuhi who was residing in Dehli and whose father was in Madinah Munawwara. Muhammed Ashraf Sabuhi's home was located and a message sent to him to visit Hakim Nabeena Ansari. Ashraf Sabuhi came to see Hakim Nabeena Ansari. Hakim Nabeena Ansari narrated his dream to him in privacy. This way, additional bottles of “Hubb-e-Rooh-uz-Zahab” reached Maulana Abdul Baqi.

Hakim Nabeena Ansari was extremely pleased to know that Ashraf Sabuhi had visited him earlier as well and he had prescribed “Hubb-e-Rooh-uz-Zahab” for Maulana Abdul Baqi, and that his prescription had been approved by the Beloved Prophet (SAW). “Hubb-e-Rooh-uz-Zahab” came to be known as an extremely effective medicine. I am including this hitherto unpublished dream, which is hundred per cent true, in the book with thanks to Mr. Ashraf Sabuhi, currently the Liaison Officer of Hamdard National Foundation, Lahore.

When Allama Iqbal suffered from Kidneys pain in 1928, Hakim Nabeena Ansari treated him with special care and prescribed “Hubb-e-Rooh-uz-Zahab” for him as well. On recovery, Allama Iqbal wrote the following verses and sent them to Hakim Nabina Ansari:

*Hai Do Ruhoon Ka Nasheman paikar-e-Khaki Mera,  
Rakhta Hai Betab Donon Ko Maira Zauq-e-Talab.  
Aik Jo Allah Ney Bakhshi Hai Mujhay Subh-e-Azal,  
Doosri Hai Aap Ki Bakhshi Hui Rooh-uz-Zahab.*

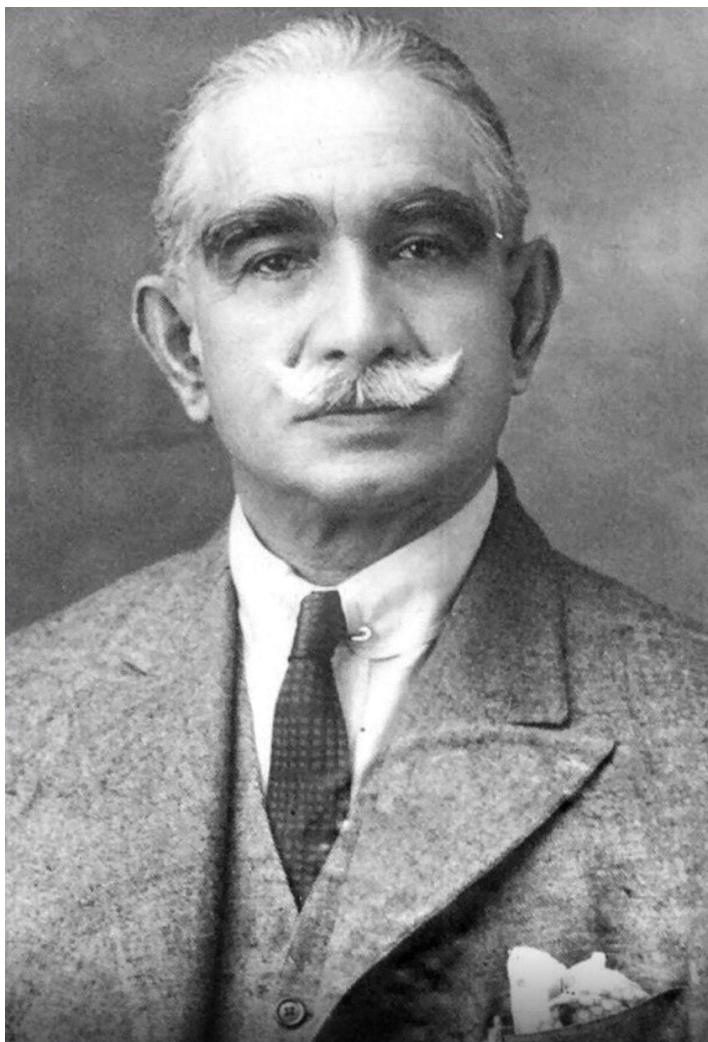
Maulana Hakeem Hafiz Abdul Wahab Ansari Yusufpuri (District Ghazipur, U.P. Bharat) known as Hakeem Nabeena was an acknowledged Hakim of Dehli and a student and follower of Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi. He graduated from Dar ul Uloom Deoband in spite of being blind. Due to the prayers and blessings of Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi Allah had given him a

mastery over pulse reading. He used to put his fingers on the pulse of the patient and used to diagnose and explain about the disease with such perfection that other doctors would arrive at after experimentation and observation. His pulse reading capabilities were miraculous. He had desired to be buried near Maulana Gangohi. When he died in Dehli, his mortal remains were brought by car to Gangoh Sharif and he was buried near Hazrat Gangohi. *(As stated in Hundred Years of the life of Dar ul Uloom Deoband by Allama Qari Maulana Muhammad Tayyab, Administrator, Dar ul Uloom Deoband).*

When Hakim Nabeena Ansari was appointed Head of the Doctors Team of Hyderabad Deccan State, one of his ardent fans wrote the following verses:

*Daikhna Gauhar Shanasi Shah Asif Jah Kee,  
Allah Allah Kiya Nazar Hai, Kiya Nigah-e-Intikhab.  
Khidmat-e-Tibbi Kee Khatir Voh Chuna Fard-e-Farid  
Aaj Hindustan Mein Jiska Nahin Koi Jawab.  
Reh Gaye Sub Aankhon Valay Daikhtay Kay Daikhtay,  
Bun Gaye Sadrul Atbaa Maulvi Abdul Wahab*

Foregoing was personally narrated by Al-Haj Ashraf Sabuhi to the author and then included in book mentioned above.



DR. MUKHTAR AHMED ANṢARI

## DR. MUKHTAR AHMED ANSARI A LIFE WELL LIVED

In every generation a person is born who, by dint of his God given qualities, hard work and sincerity of purpose becomes a beacon and guiding light for the future generations. Ansaris of Yusufpur are lucky that they had two such persons in one generation. Besides Hakim Nabina Ansari, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari was also a role model for the Ansaris of Yusufpur.

He was the younger brother of Hakim Nabeena Ansari, who has been written about in some detail earlier. His father, Abdurrahman, held a prominent position with the Government in District Baliya.

Born in 1880, he received his early education at the Middle School, Yusufpur and passed his matriculation examination from the Victoria High School, Ghazipur in 1896. He moved to Hyderabad for his university education where his two elder brothers were in the service of Nizam.

Immediately after his graduation in medical sciences from the Madras Medical College where he secured first position, he proceeded to England on a Nizam State Scholarship for higher education. He qualified for M.D. and M.S. in 1905 from the University of Edinburgh,

topping the list of successful candidates, by virtue of which he was the only Indian to be appointed Registrar, Lock Hospital at London. He was a top-notch student and worked at the Lock Hospital and the Charing Cross Hospital in London. He was an Indian pioneer in surgery. To honour his work, a ward was named after him (Ansari Ward) in the Charing Cross Hospital. However, it was lost to the move of the hospital to a new location in 1973. Naming a ward after a 'subject' had never happened before. The move was opposed by a large number of doctors and others. Lieutenant Colonel Dr. Shah describes the incident in these words:

"I met Dr. Ansari for the first time in London. He had earned his degree in medicine from Edinburgh University while I was living the life of a student in St. Bartholomew Hospital. He was house surgeon of Charing Cross Hospital in those days. An educational facility was also attached to the hospital. I can truthfully state that Ansari was one of the first few Indians who were appointed House Surgeons in a teaching hospital".

It was my routine to go to meet Ansari every Saturday in the late afternoon. One evening I was strolling in the Easter End when I the heading of an evening newspaper. It said in bold letters "A gross injustice to the English doctors". I bought the newspaper and was greatly surprised to find that the whole news item was about my friend Ansari, criticising his appointment in a major



hospital in London being an Indian. It was emphasized that such positions should only be occupied by the English doctors.

As a person, Dr. Ansari was extremely popular in the hospital and his colleagues had expressed their resentment against this criticism by a newspaper. After a couple of days of this incident the Governing Council of Charing Cross Hospital issued an official statement stating that the appointment of Ansari was purely due to his capabilities. It further added that it would be a sad day when the criterion for the selection of a house surgeon would be something other than pure merit”.

During his long and eventful stay in London, Dr. Ansari was drawn into the Indian national scene by meeting and developing close relations with some Indian national leaders who visited London quite frequently. It was in London that he met and became a life-long friend of Motilal Nehru, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Jawaharlal Nehru.

In spite of ample opportunities to continue his comfortable and prosperous life abroad, Dr. Ansari returned to India in 1910. After a short stay at Hyderabad and his home town, Yusufpur, he established his medical practice in Delhi. Soon after this move, Dr. Ansari started taking active part in politics.

In public life, his name appeared for the first time on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1912 in the daily 'Comrade' in the Dehli edition whereby the public was given the good news that Dr. Ansari, whose name as an outstanding surgeon needed no introduction, was going to lead a Medical Mission of the Indian Red Crescent to Turkey. The same news was published in other newspapers and Dr. Ansari's fame spread across the Country.

The aim of Ansari Medical Mission to Turkey was to provide medical and surgical services to the fighting Turkish army in the Balkan War. The mission was a milestone in the contemporary Indian history for a number of reasons. Firstly, the news of the Mission imbibed a new zeal and spirit amongst the Muslims of India which reached its zenith in the form of Khilafat Movement. Secondly, the mission was the first and different step in the history of India towards the genesis of the policy of close relations with the West Asian countries. This policy was fostered further by the Indian National Congress during the struggle for freedom and, finally, Government of the free and independent India made it a foundational element of its foreign policy and continues to follow it to this day.

The third important aspect of the Mission, albeit usually side lined, was that the Hindu leaders and newspapers also supported Muslims on the issue of Balkan War.

To express his sympathy, the Viceroy of India himself donated for the Balkan war fund. Other senior officials of the civil service also followed suit.

Although the mission was organised by Muslim leaders, it also paved the way for the Indian national leaders to put India on the world map by advocating and fostering international understanding and kindling the spirit of brotherhood amongst Muslim nations.

At that point in time, Congress and the Muslim League were close in their political goals and one did not find it difficult to express himself from both platforms simultaneously. Thus, Dr. Ansari successfully established himself in both circles and played an important role in negating the 1916 Lucknow Pact as a result of which Muslim League and Congress agreed upon the idea of proportional representation.

In 1918 he presided over the annual session of the Muslim League held at Delhi. His Presidential Address was proscribed by the Government because of his bold and fearless stand for the cause of the Khilafat and his un-conditional support to the demand for complete freedom. In 1920 he was President of the Nagpur session of All-India Muslim League; Sessions of Indian National Congress under the president-ship of Vijayaraghavachariar of Madras and All-India Khilafat Committee under Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were

being held simultaneously at the same location. Thus, a joint session of all the three organisations was agreed to and held.

As in Muslim League, Dr. Ansari held exalted positions in the Congress as well. All through his life he was member of its Working Committee. He was its General Secretary in the years 1920, 1922, 1926, 1929, 1931 and 1932, and President in 1927 (Madras Session). On the question of entry in the Council to the government from inside, Dr. Ansari remained with Gandhi ji in the camp of the 'no-changers' who were against the entry. His personal relationship, however, remained un-severed with the 'pro-changers', prominent among them being Pandit Motilal Nehru and Vithalbhai Patel. His palatial residence in Delhi, 'Darus-Salam' (House of Peace) was for all practical purposes the Congress House. Gandhi ji used to stay there whenever he visited Delhi.

Although integral to the Indian national politics, Dr. Ansari also had access to the corridors of power of the British Government. Thus, he often came to know about the governmental decisions regarding prominent national leaders in advance and was able to alert them in time. During the Non-Cooperation Movement, he took keen interest in the establishment of independent national institutions for higher education, two of them being the Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi and Kashi Vidyapith at Benares. From its inception on October 29,

1920, Jamia Millia Islamia had the unconditional support of Dr. Ansari. He was elected its Chancellor after the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan, the first Chancellor of Jamia.

Impressed and influenced by the political and social services of her husband, Mrs Ansari, a devout and orthodox Muslim, also supported him wholeheartedly and took keen interest in the uplift of Women in Delhi. It was due to her extraordinary organisational skills that Dr. Ansari's mansion managed to play host to hundreds of political associates daily.

On the night of May 10, 1936 when he was on his way back from Missouri where he had gone to pay a professional visit to the Nawab of Rampur, Dr. Ansari's suffered a heart attack and this valiant soldier of Indian Independence Movement breathed his last. He was laid to rest in Jamia Millia Islamia, an institution for which he had worked so selflessly, especially during the last few years of his life. He was buried at the same spot where he had desired to make his home. Like most of his goals, he succeeded in achieving that as well, albeit in death.

Dr. Ansari lived a relatively short life of fifty six years. However, if the length of a life is measured in terms of accomplishments, he achieved in fifty six years what others would find impossible to accomplish in a century.

*He was truly an embodiment of 'a life well lived'.*

22  
ACCOLADES FROM  
CONTEMPORARIES  
FOR DR. ANSARI

AN UNBLEMISHED PERSONALITY  
INDIRA GANDHI □ PRIME MINISTER  
(LATE) OF INDIA

*Shrimati Indira Gandhi –late Prime Minister of India, performed the opening ceremony of the centenary celebrations of Dr. Ansari at Jamia Millia Islamia in Dehli on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1980. Her inaugural speech on the occasion reflecting her views and respect she held for Dr. Ansari, as translated from the magazine “Aaj Kal, Dehli – Dr. Ansari Number, January 1981 issue, is being presented here.*

It is a matter of pride for me to have the opportunity to attend this function and pay tribute to a shining star of the freedom movement of our country. There is another reason for me to say so, which is rather personal. Dr. Ansari was a very close friend and associate of my grandfather and father. In a way, he was a member of our family; hence a part of my childhood memories.

Since he was amongst the founders of this institute, it is quite appropriate to convene this event here.

I had an opportunity to attend the Centennial Function of Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband Yesterday. There are many contributing currents in the ocean of our Nationalism whose sources are perennial and permanent in nature. Dar-ul-Uloom is also such a source. Jamia Millia Islamia is the second source in the series. This institution is dear to us as it has enjoyed a relationship with Mahatma Gandhi, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Doctor Ansari, Maulana Azad and Doctor Zakir Hussain.

Doctor Ansari was a front-rank leader. He had already earned a highly distinctive position in his profession in the early stages of his life. It was a characteristic of the Movement initiated by Gandhi Ji that not only those who had attained prominence in different professions were attracted to it, but along with them the ordinary and unknown from the masses were also pulled in to it. On one end of the spectrum were distinguished and famous intellectuals, and on the other were simple souls. My grandfather and Shri C. R. Das left the profession of law to join Gandhi Ji. Dr. Ansari, who had acquired fame as well as mastery of his profession, became an activist. He was one of the top leaders of the Khilafat Movement. He also founded the Dehli Pradesh Congress.

His opinion and advice were sought and highly respected in the inner circle of Congress. He was made President of the Indian National Congress, and hence during the

colonial era the nation bestowed upon him the highest honour that it could.

He had an unblemished personality. Throughout his life he served as a bridge between Hindus and Muslims, Traditional and Modern thought, old and new approaches.

Quite a few memories of my early days come to mind. I remember his house in Dehli. It was the house where the famous photograph of me and Gandhi Ji was taken. It was perhaps 1924 or 1925 and Gandhi Ji was on hunger strike at that time.

Dr. Ansari was free from of prejudices of any kind. His hospitality had become a legend. He treated the famous and the ordinary with equal respect and honour. Every true national worker was his esteemed guest.

We have celebrated quite a few centenaries in the recent years, just as those of Tilak, Gokhlay, Moti Lal Nehru, Tagore, Shri Aurobandu, Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel. Last year the centennial birthday of Sarojini Naidu was celebrated. This year the centennials of Munshi Prem Chand and Dr. Ansari are being celebrated. It is a long list as the nineteenth century was particularly an era that gave birth to a number of distinguished and famous personalities, both men and women.

These Centennial Celebrations are not a new honour for these great personalities. They worked throughout their



lives, earned fame and gratitude and left behind a precious heritage for us.

These occasions that we celebrate are not for them. They are for us so that we can benefit from them and become worthy of our nation and country. More important than placing statues and monuments and naming roads after those sons and daughters of the nation who have earned a name is to look in to our hearts and get the hidden strength therefrom.

I am pleased to know that a book on the writings of Dr. Ansari as well as his biography will be published soon. I hope through these books our new generation will be introduced to these great personalities through whose work it is moving ahead.

Today, once again we need the same qualities of which he was an embodiment of; charity, humanity, the spirit to dedicate one's self for national service, total absence of religious bigotry and bias, profound respect for people belonging to other religions and professions and nobility of heart.

### **Loss of a Dear and Great Son of India**

*Condolence Message by Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru, late  
Prime Minister of India on the demise of Dr. Ansari.*

*Translated from the Magazine "Aajkal, Dehli – Dr.  
Ansari Number, January 1981 issue.*

Hindustan is submerged in grief on the loss of a dear and great son. It is our ill fortune that we get used to the grief and sorrow, yet the biting hurt does not lessen, and the bitterness of sorrow remains. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari has passed away. The nation whose bright adornment he was, as well as our national movement whose strong pillar and leader he was, feels sad and barren. We remember his obvious qualities, his services to the nation and sacrifices for the freedom. A Lot of us remember him as a kind and sincere friend. He never left us alone. But he is not here today.

I met him approximately thirty one years ago. My pen fails to truly express what his friendship meant to me in our journey of struggle and mutual sufferings. His greatest service was related to the Hindu-Muslim problems.

The nation has lost a lot in his tragic and sudden death. He was not only my beloved and old friend, but was also a great colleague and associate in the war of independence for Hindustan. The great sons of Hindustan are continuously departing and the nation is being deprived of their services at such a critical juncture. Dr. Ansari underwent a lot of hardships and sufferings for the nation. To feel broken hearted on losing him is natural. However, we are helpless when it comes to the will of God. We will continue to struggle till

the attainment of our goal. And this resolve will be the best monument for the great departed leader.

Ansari, my closest friend, who was a strong pillar of our struggle was somewhat in-active in politics lately due to his ill health. He was about to depart and leave us alone. He was forever our leader for the myriad and complicated Hindu-Muslim related problems. For a very large number of years, Dehli was, more than a royal city, more than the capital of the British Indian Government, the city of Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari for us. Hakim Sahab passed away a few years ago. Now with the passing away of Dr. Ansari, Dehli has become a place reminiscent of heart aching memories for me.

### **Dr. Ansari in the eyes of Mahatma Gandhi**

Mahatma Gandhi was ten or twelve years older than Dr. Ansari. However, their relations were based on openness and sincerity. Apart from politics, these great leaders enjoyed an affinity and close personal relationship. Like other major leaders of that era, Gandhi Ji also used to stay at Dr. Ansari's palatial mansion called Dar-ul-Salam at Darya Ganj, Dehli. They had another relationship as well – that of Doctor and patient. This doctor-patient relationship was so close that Gandhi Ji wrote to Dr. Ansari in a letter:

“You still owe me a medical check-up. However, don't make it official as you have just returned from England

and the fee for check-up by a London returned Doctor is one thousand rupees”.

Gandhi Ji was sick in Poona and had told Sarojini Naidu that he wished to die with his head in the lap of Dr. Ansari. The message was conveyed to him through telegram. He replied: “I will not let Gandhi Ji die. I am reaching Poona post-haste”.

Gandhi Ji used to say: “I am only concerned about my spiritual health. As for physical health, Dr. Ansari, Dr. Jeoraj Mehta and Dr. B. C. Roy are responsible for it”. He frequently expressed the nature of his relationship with Dr. Ansari as follows: “Dr. Ansari has established such a strong bond of love and like mindedness between me and him that it can withstand the severest strain.

On advocating the election of Dr. Ansari as President of Congress, Gandhi Ji opined:

“The election of Dr. Ansari as President of the National Assembly next year is a done deal. At national level, there is no one who can have any reservations in this regard. Dr. Ansari is as good an Indian as he is a Muslim. No one can imagine that he has any prejudices. For years he has remained a trustworthy confidante of Congress. His struggle for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity is known to all.

The truth is that if I in Balagam, Sarojini Naidu in Kanpur and Sir Nivasan Aengar in Gauhati had not

come in the way, he would have been elected on any of those occasions. However, special considerations kept his election in abeyance so that we could elect him at a time when his need would be the most. If any proposal for Hindu-Muslim Unity is acceptable to both parties, Dr. Ansari is the person who can present such a scheme on behalf of Congress.

Thus I most respectfully disagree with the point of view that a Hindu majority party should be represented by a Hindu President so that any such scheme can be said to have total support of all Hindus. On the contrary, and keeping in view the current poisonous environment, there would be no better omen than a Hindu majority party electing a Muslim president without contest and with complete unanimity. In fact it will be a proof that Hindus are truly desirous of and working for the Hindu-Muslim unity.

There is nobody more respected than Dr. Ansari in the eyes of the nationalist Muslim leaders. For this reason, my opinion that Dr. Ansari leads the Congress next year is most appropriate from all angles. Not only approval of such a scheme is desired. More than its approval by both parties, its execution on the right lines is very important. If the scheme is approved, its execution will need untiring efforts and supervision. Dr. Ansari is the most suitable person for this task. Thus, I hope that all states

will unanimously recommend the name of Dr. Ansari for this highest honour as a gift to him by the nation”.

As a testimony to Dr. Ansari’s selflessness and sincerity he says:

“I do not know if Dr. Ansari has more interest, association and involvement in any matter than the Sectarian Issue. He loves his profession and is quite content with devoting himself to it. If we see him in the field of politics, even as the President of Congress, it is because of persuasion by his friends to accept this position. He is so patriotic and noble at heart that he could not say no to his friends. Resolution of the sectarian issue is his top most priority. I hope God makes it happen. The greatest good forms the shape of humans before it happens”.

Finally, Dr. Ansari was chosen as the President in the Congress Session held in Madras in 1927. On his election, Gandhi Ji said:

“The welcoming committee has selected, without contest, an experienced and well groomed person so that he can preside over this session. He views this position as a means to achieve the goal he has set for himself. Dr. Ansari is a surgeon, and he is one of the best India has produced. Since he is a surgeon, he is determined to nurse back to health the fractured Hindu-Muslim relations. I know that a lot of state Congress committees

have voted for Dr. Ansari with the hope that he will heal the deep wounds. However, we must not make the mistake of assuming that our duty is over after choosing him the President. A patient's job is not over on selecting the best and the wisest doctor for his treatment. It is expected of him to fully cooperate with the doctor and follow his instructions diligently. We are patients, and Dr. Ansari is our surgeon. We have called him to treat us. If we do not wholeheartedly cooperate with him, it will be our folly, not his”.

After election, Dr. Ansari delivered his presidential address. He analysed the problems realistically like an expert surgeon and made appropriate suggestions for improvement of the prevalent situation. Gandhi Ji presented his opinion on Dr. Ansari's speech in the following words:

“A special strength of Dr. Ansari's speech was his immense desire for Hindu-Muslim Unity. He knew that he was expected to express this desire. If any one person could do that, it would be Dr. Ansari. He accepted the gift of nation's highest honour as he had confidence in the nation, the objective and himself. Undoubtedly he left no stone unturned in the accomplishment of his desire, and luck also favoured him”.

A session was held in Lucknow to delve upon the 'Nehru Report'. Dr. Ansari was the moving spirit behind it. Gandhi Ji praised his colleague in the following words:

“Dr. Ansari’s name should be added with his (Moti Lal Nehru) name. Everyone can see that he has kept followers of different parties together with courage and tact. However, what he has been doing for the past few months behind the scenes is known to few. Success would have been impossible if Dr. Ansari had not stood up to support the Nehru Committee at the appropriate time. He made full use of the affection the Muslims had for him. It was impossible for any Hindu to challenge his full spirited patriotism. Hence he won the confidence of everybody”.

Gandhi Ji reflects upon the hospitality of Dr. Ansari:

“I had a lot of experience of Dr. Ansari’s generosity. However, during my recent visit to Dehli I saw another dimension of the same. He insisted that all members of the working committee stay at his residence. In addition to these members there were other guests as well. Due to inadequacy of even his vast residence, people had to be camped in the huge compound. There were approximately a hundred guests at his home every day. On one side was his vast medical practice, and on the other a continuous stream of visitors from all states and then looking after them, Discussions on the working of



Congress, finding time for discussions. In spite of these onerous commitments I never Dr. Ansari lagging in patience, worried or tense. Boarding and feeding such a large number of guests would perhaps exhaust another person, but I never Dr. Ansari wary or exhausted.

What could be the secret behind this excellent handling? It is Mrs. Ansari. I once asked Dr. Ansari in the presence of his wife as to how he could arrange the feeding and lodging of so many. He replied: "The credit goes to Mrs. Ansari. I hand over my earnings to her. She knows Urdu well and keeps a detailed account of every penny spent. She gets the required supplies and spends as she wants. As such I am not concerned about the domestic affairs'. Having heard that, I bowed my head in reverence to Mrs. Ansari. It is not that throughout the length and breadth of India she is the only lady who does that. There must be others in every nook and corner of the Country. However, we do not have knowledge about them. Readers would be pleased to know that there are two kitchens in Dr. Ansari's residence. A Brahmin cook prepares separate meals for vegetarians".

Dr. Zakir Hussain, Chancellor of the Jamia Millia, who later became the third President of India, addressed the nation on 10<sup>th</sup> May 1936 through All India Radio. He remembered Dr. Ansari in the following words:

“Around one or one thirty a.m. yesterday Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari suddenly departed from the World. He had left for Missouri day before yesterday. On his way back his heart stopped beating and he left this mortal world leaving behind a mountain of tasks, innumerable fans, this nation for which he suffered untold hardships, Muslims whom he served all his life and got nothing in return other than criticism, those Hindus and Muslims whose unity and love for each other he toiled and sweated for, those patients whose last hope was his clinic, Jamia Millia whose children brought him such satisfaction and in whose lives he believed those wishes would come true that are dreams today, and yes, leaving his home and hearth, his family, relatives and friends. One wonders why he left them all in the middle of the night and took a path from which nobody turns back”.

Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, head of the Shibli School and Nadvi family, remembered Dr. Ansari in the Journal “Maarif” Azamgarh, June edition, in the following words:

Even though Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari belonged to a noble family of Yusufpur, an important town of Ghazipur, the Kanaan of this Yousuf (a simile to Prophet Yusuf and his place of birth) was not restricted to Yusufpur alone. It was the whole of India. As such, entire India is grieving his death today”.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Nightingale of India remembered Dr. Ansari in these words:

“My love for Dr. Ansari is strung with the memories of my childhood in Hyderabad. His death is a personal loss and a cause of grief for me. As such, I cannot say anything more than that he was undoubtedly the most beloved personality of our generation”.

Moulvi Kifayatullah, President of Mufti Mahmood-ul-Hassan's (The prisoner of Malta) Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind remembered Dr. Ansari in these words:

“Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari's personality needs no introduction. He was a sincere citizen, a true patriot, a brave soldier of national independence and a selfless sympathizer and a benefactor of people. His deeds for the nation shine brighter than the sun. His services and efforts for the medical Mission to Balkan will always glow in the annals of history.

From amongst the nation's patriots, Ansari was the first to welcome Shaikh-ul-Hind's call '*I am an Ansari for Allah*'. He sacrificed his comforts, needs and personal sentiments for freedom of the nation. His presence was a symbol of beneficence and sincerity for the humanity. He was a true descendent and representative of his ancestor, Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA),

In the death of Dr. Ansari India has lost a physician par excellence, a beacon of knowledge, a symbol of nobility

and good manners, a patriot, a sound national leader and a person who placed knowledge and those who possessed it close to his heart. We do not expect another person of his calibre to be born in the near future”.



AN AUTOGRAPHED PICTURE OF DR.  
ANṢARI

## 23

# THE MESSIAH MOVES MEDICAL MISSION TO TURKEY

Turkey was Islamic Caliphate's Capital at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. As such, Muslims of India had a strong affinity for the Caliphate and the Turks. Dr. Ansari was no exception. In addition, he had another special relation with Turkey and that bond must have been rooted deep in his subconscious. His ancestor Hazrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (RA) was buried in Istanbul, Turkey. Dr. Ansari was proud of being a descendent of that great companion and host of Rasulullah (SAW), and used to mention his lineage going back to him in conversations.

On 19 October 1912 in the daily newspaper 'Comrade', Dehli, public was given the good news that Dr. Ansari, whose name as an outstanding surgeon needed no introduction, was going to lead a Medical Mission of the Indian Red Crescent to Turkey. Thereafter, on 26<sup>th</sup> October, his detailed article titled "Red Crescent Mission for Turkey" was published in 'Comrade' Dehli, in which he most effectively articulated the need for sending a military hospital to Turkey to treat the wounded of Balkan war. He advocated the need for the Mission in the following words:

“Even though the Turks have been in a constant state of war ever since they established their hegemony over the Bosphorus, but the war they are fighting now is unique and the largest they have ever fought”.

After elucidating on the importance of Balkans for the Ottoman Caliphate, he brought forward two reasons for the imminent need of sending a medical Mission. They were:

Since Turkish Armed Forces Medical Corps has been recently established, they are not capable of handling the dangerous situation created by the war.

Western powers are supporting the Turkish adversary with armament on a huge scale. In comparison, Turks are depending on their own resources with no external support. To help alleviate their dire predicament, a full-fledged military hospital capable of accommodating and treating a large number of injured soldiers is necessary. To achieve this aim, a lot of capital and manpower will be required.

In his article he also drew attention to the fact that the quickly deteriorating situation in Turkey warranted immediate measures without any loss of time. If the Mission was delayed and could not leave by Mid-November, the efforts put in to this venture would be largely lost.

The Mission, instead of leaving in Mid-November, was delayed for a Month and finally managed to leave in Mid-December. However, keeping in view the magnitude of organizational efforts required for the job, it was no mean feat.

According to the scheme of Dr. Ansari, six to eight medical doctors trained in the hospitals in Britain were required. In addition, nursing staff and other ancillary personnel were also needed. Imparting First Aid training to them prior to departure was also mandatory.

An important aspect of this project was that all members of the Mission had to bear their own expenses.

It is felt by many that the scheme to send a medical Mission to Turkey was the brain child of Maulana Muhammad Ali. However, this understanding is based on either ignorance of facts or is a figment of misguided imagination. Mir Mehfooz Ali Badiwani, who, besides being associated with the administrative matters of 'Comrade' and 'Hamdard' (two leading news journals of that era) also provided editorial content, is on record in saying "when news of the need of Turks for medical services became known, Dr. Ansari planned to take a medical Mission there".

However, it would be an injustice not to acknowledge that if Dr. Ansari's proposal had not been supported whole heartedly by Maulana Mohammed Ali Jauhar



perhaps it would not have become a reality. To support Turkey, an Organization named “Red Crescent” had been established in Dehli. Maulana Muhammad Ali presented Dr. Ansari’s scheme in its meeting. He asked Mir Mehfooz Ali, manager of ‘Comrade’ about the financial position. He replied that he had around Forty Five thousand Rupees. Maulana Muhammad Ali immediately replied: “We have enough funds. Ansari, I have decided that the Mission will most definitely go to Turkey”.

The same night, Maulana Muhammad Ali wrote a heart rending article in ‘Comrade’, and made an impassioned appeal to the Muslims of India to come forward and contribute for the noble cause. This led to a rain of money on the office of the ‘Comrade’. Mir Mehfooz Ali narrated the situation in the following words: “I am a witness that my hand got numb signing on the Money Orders and Parcels received for the cause”. This situation was not restricted to Dehli alone. All major cities and towns had their own Red Crescent Committees and received contributions for the Mission. Newspapers carried pages full of donations given by the ordinary as well as the affluent. People donated their life savings. Women gave their jewellery. Nawab Rampur and all other Muslim rulers of states contributed generously. Muslims of India rallied together and the spirit of unity and solidarity reached its zenith.

In order to alleviate ill feelings of Muslims of India towards the British Government and to express his sympathy and practical support, Viceroy of India himself donated in the fund for Balkan war. Other senior officials of the civil service also followed suit.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 1912, Dr. Ansari passed through Lucknow Railway Station. Even though the news of his passing through reached the masses late, yet a very large crowd gathered to see and welcome the great warrior in the name of Allah. Shams-ul-Ulema Maulana Shibli Nomani kissed the boot of Dr. Ansari as it was to step on the soil of the Caliphate of Islam to serve in the name of Allah.

A group photo of the Mission members was published in the 'Comrade' of 25<sup>th</sup> February 1913. The group consisted of three rows. Members' names, starting from the last row, were as follows:

Third Row (Standing): Abdul Aziz Ansari (father of Muhammad Hamid Ansari, Honourable Vice President of India) Hussain Raza Baig, Hamid Rasool, Abdulrahman Peshawari, Abdul Waheed Khan, Shoaib Qureshi.

Second Row (Standing): Nur-ul-Hassan, Chiragh-ud-din, Taungar Hussain, Qazi Bashir-ud-din Ahmed, Yusuf Ansari, Tafazzul Hussain, Manzoor Ali.

Front Row (Sitting): Ghulam Ahmed, Dr. Mahmudullah, Dr. Muhammad Naeem Ansari, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari (Director) Muhammad Ali (Organiser) Dr. Ali Azhar Faizi (Assistant Director), Dr. Shams-ul-Bari, Abdurrahman Siddiqui (Manager), Chaudhary Khaleeq-uz-Zaman.

Foregoing is not the complete list of the Mission members, merely of those present in the photograph. A couple of the members had missed the photo shoot. A few also reached Constantinople directly from Britain. Dr. Abdulrahman Behari, Dr. Raza Hyderabad, Al-e-Imran and Hassan Abid Jafri from London and Abdul Qayyum from India were amongst those. In addition Manzoor Mahmud joined the Mission from Dehli. He had a melodious voice and kept the Mission entertained through his singing. His son Talat Mahmud became a legend in the Bombay film industry later.

On departure from Dehli, the crowd that had come to see off the Mission swelled to the extent that it was difficult for the Mission members to reach their compartments. The Mission left for Turkey by Sea from Bombay on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1912. They were accorded warm welcome at Aden, Suez and Alexandria. At Istanbul, President of Turkish Red Crescent came on board the ship to welcome them. On landing at Istanbul, Turkish public and soldiers displayed great warmth and solidarity. The Caliph of Muslims also honoured the

Mission by granting them an audience. Civil and Military Officers completely trusted the Mission as its members were not salaried employees. In addition, it comprised of seasoned doctors and staff who had devoted themselves to provide the best possible medical care to the sick. Another distinctive feature of the Mission was that a number of Turk nurses and Doctor Asad Fawad, an Egyptian, also joined it, giving it a truly pan-Islamic identity.

It is also pertinent to mention that German, French and British Red Cross hospitals were also functioning in Turkey at that time. However, their performance left much to be desired. Dr. Ansari wrote in one of the despatches:

“Even though it does not sound plausible, however, there exists an impression due to the poor performance of these hospitals that a lot of injured assigned to them have been intentionally maimed. If care had been exercised in their treatment, their limbs would have been saved”.

One of the major obstacles that the Mission faced in Turkey was lack of knowledge of the Turkish language. Initially, Arabic and Persian words and hand symbols were used. However, providence soon provided relief in the shape of Haji Jilani, an elderly person of Indian origin who hailed from Surat and had travelled extensively throughout Western Asia. He had married an

Egyptian lady and visited Turkey every year. He was employed to work for the Mission. It was through Haji Jilani that some members of the Mission met Anwer Bey, who was considered a Hero in the Islamic countries, particularly India. Anwer Bey later on visited the Mission and was photographed with the members of the Mission.

After a stay of approximately six Months, nine members of the Mission returned to Bombay. The other members either left for Haj or stayed in Turkey for some more time. Those who had joined from Britain returned to London directly.

Amongst those who returned from Turkey, in addition to Dr. Ansari, Shoaib Qureshi, Abdurrahman Siddiqui and Khaliquzzaman took part in Freedom Movement and politics on All India level and Dr. Muhammed Naeem Ansari, Qazi Bashir-ud-Din Ahmed and Abdul Aziz Ansari took part in Politics at provincial and local levels.

Even though the aim of Ansari Medical Mission was to provide medical and surgical aid to the fighting Turkish army in the Balkan War, its long term impact on India was much greater in magnitude than anticipated. The Mission was a milestone in the contemporary Indian history for a number of reasons. Firstly, it imbibed a new zeal and spirit amongst the Muslims of India that reached its zenith in the form of Khilafat Movement.

Secondly, the Mission was the first pioneer step in the history of India that laid the genesis of the policy of close relations with Countries of Western Asia. This policy was fostered further by the Indian National Congress during the struggle for freedom. Thirdly, when the Government of free and independent India was formed, it made it a foundational element of its foreign policy and continues to do so to this day. The fourth important aspect of the Mission, usually side lined, was that the Hindu leaders and newspapers also sided with Muslims in supporting Turkey.

Prior to his departure, Dr. Ansari had visited Aligarh to solicit support for the Mission. Students Union of Aligarh University was allowed to hold a meeting to welcome him. Dr. Ziauddin, Principal of the College thanked Dr. Ansari for visiting Aligarh.

Immediately after the visit of Dr. Ansari, anti-British sentiments of the students of Aligarh were inflamed. They started condemning the British in their meetings. To show solidarity with the cause of supporting Turks in their hour of need, they stopped use of expensive clothes and food. By doing so, they saved forty five thousand rupees for the cause, which they deposited with Maulana Mohammed Ali Johar. It is pertinent to mention here that at least six members of the Ansari Mission were directly from Aligarh College, i.e., Khaliquzzaman, Shoaib Qureshi, Abdulrahman Bijnauri, Abdul Aziz

Ansari Manzoor Mahmood and Abdulrahman Peshawari. Abdulrahman Peshawari stayed back in Turkey and joined the Turkish army. He took part in the First World War along with the Turkish army.

Turkish writer and politician Khalida Adeeb Khanum praised Dr. Ansari and his Medical Mission in the following words:

*It was 1912 when I saw the people of India from close. Balkan War had ended, but the on-going suffering of its post war tribulations was still going on. The Red Crescent delegation of India was prominent in sessions in Istanbul. The president of the delegation was Dr. Ansari. In my view he was the best representative of the Indian Muslims.*



DR. ANŞARI IN THE TURKISH ARMY  
UNIFORM



24  
DEEDS SPEAK LOUDER THAN  
WORDS  
DR. MUKHTAR AHMED ANSARI

Some figures of history may need propping up with the support of words, and writers may wax eloquent to paint their picture larger than their lives and deeds. However, in case of Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, fondly called Dr. Ansari, a mere listing of his deeds would be sufficient, as his deeds did indeed speak louder than words. Here is a chronology of the major milestones of this great leader as a synopsis of his vast achievements.

1880: Born on 25<sup>th</sup> December at Yusufpur, District Ghazipur, UP. Father's name was Abdurrahman and mother's name was Alhan Bibi.

1887: Received early education at the Middle School, Yusufpur.

1896: Passed Matriculation Examination from Victoria High School, Ghazipur.

1898: Passed F.S.C from M.C. College Allahabad.

1899: Got married to paternal cousin Shamsunnisa in Hyderabad, Deccan.

1901: Departed for London for education in the field of medicine on scholarship of Nizam of Hyderabad.

1901 to 1908: Studied medicine in London. He passed M.D., M.S, L.R.C.P & M.R.C.S exams with distinction. Worked at Lock and Charing Cross Hospitals in London. He was appointed Registrar at Lock Hospital and later on House Surgeon of Charing Cross Hospital where he worked under the famous Surgeon Doctor Stanley Boyd, who was also the honorary surgeon to the King of England. He was appointed Secretary and later on President of the Indian Medical Association.

He also met Hakim Ajmal Khan, Moti Lal Nehru and Pundit Jawahar Lal Nehru for the first time in London.

1910: Returned from London. He stayed in Hyderabad and Yusufpur for some time. Thereafter, he arrived in Dehli and started his medical practice. Was also offered Principal's position at Lahore Medical College but declined.

1912: Left Dehli on 8th December and Bombay on 15th December for Turkey as leader of a Medical Mission to look after injured and sick of the Balkan War.

1913: The Mission returned from Turkey on 04 July. He visited Kanpur a number of times to look after the injured of Kanpur Masjid related mishap.

1914: Took part in the Convention held in connection with the formation of Foundational Constitution of India.

1915: Attended Annual Session of Muslim League in Bombay. Also attended and took active part in the Committee formed to promote cooperation and participation between Congress and Muslim League. Attended Fatehpuri Masjid Meeting after the rebellion of Shareef of Makkah against British Government.

1916: Attended joint session of Congress and Muslim League in Lucknow and played an important role in the signing of Lucknow Pact.

1917: A number of meetings held at the residence of Dr. Ansari in connection with those arrested in connection with World War 1. A Committee to fight for the release of those arrested was formed and Dr. Ansari was chosen as Secretary of the Committee. Attended Joint Meeting of Congress and Muslim League in Calcutta. Met Mahatma Gandhi as a second step towards cooperation between Congress and Muslim League. Was chosen as League member of the think tank formed to delve upon joint foundational constitution.

1918: As President of the Welcome Committee of Muslim League's annual session in Dehli, delivered a speech that was proscribed by the Government.

1919: Joined Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement. Joined Khilafat Conference Committee as Member. Worked on joint cooperation of Khilafat Committee and Congress. Attended All India Muslim

Conference. Attended Congress and Muslim Leagues sessions in Amritsar.

1920: Participated in the Deputation formed to discuss matters with the viceroy of India. Government suspected his involvement in the Silk Letters Movement. Clarified his position yet was kept under observation by the Government.

1921: Departure for London on 14th February as member of the Khilafat Committee delegation for discussions with the Prime Minister of Britain.

1922: Appointed General Secretary of Congress. Made untiring efforts towards strike arranged on the arrival of Prince of Wales and recruitment of volunteers. Differed with Mahatma Gandhi on the cessation of Non-Cooperation Movement. Supported boycott of Members Council Committee formed to obtain public opinion on Non-Cooperation Movement. Acted as medical advisor to Mahatma Gandhi during his twenty one days hunger strike.

1923: Presided over Tibbiya Conference in Dehli. Inked agreement with Lala Lajpat Rai known as Ansari-Lajpat Rai Agreement.

1924: Withdrew from active politics for a few days due to Hindu-Muslim Communal riots.

1925:Supported the decision to continue running of Jamia Millia Islamia. Planned and worked for Move of Jamia Millia from Aligarh to Dehli. Remained actively involved in the matters related to Gandhi-Shaukat Ali Report on incidents in Kohat and Rawalpindi. Visited Europe along with Hakim Ajmal Khan. Held meetings in Britain and Vienna. Also visited Egypt and Palestine to further the cause of Indian Independence. Returned in October and was appointed Secretary of the Donations Committee of Jamia Millia.

1926:Looked after the duties assigned for Jamia Millia. Briefly visited Europe and resolved to keep Jamia Millia Islamia un-aligned with any political movement. Also performed duties as General Secretary of the Congress.

1927:Held All India Congress Annual Session at Madras as President. Organized Convention on Hindu-Muslim Unity in Dehli. Made strenuous efforts for a similar convention in Shimla.

1928:Appointed Chancellor of the Jamia Millia Islamia after the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan and served in that capacity until 1936. Devoted all his energies towards the establishment of this unique Muslim University that was also equally supported by leaders belonging to all other religions.

1929:Established National Education Foundation to secure funding necessary to run Jamia Islamia. Travelled

to Hyderabad to collect donations for the Jamia. Worked for the establishment of Ahrar Party and acted as its treasurer.

1930: Took active part in Salt Agitation of Mahatma Gandhi. Was arrested and released. Was re-arrested, sentenced and incarcerated.

1931: Elected General Secretary of Congress.

1932: Continued to work as General Secretary of Congress up to 1934 in spite of deteriorating health.

1934: Established Urdu Academy in Jamia Millia and presided over the same. Invited Ghazi Rauf Bey, Dr. Behjat, and Khalida Adeeb Khanum from Turkey and acted as their host at his residence. Organized and presided over the session for expansion of Jamia. Went to Germany for treatment and returned on 15<sup>th</sup> October '34.

1935: Devoted his time to the progress and growth of Jamia Millia Islamia. He had to restrict his political activities due to ill health. Authored "Regeneration in Man" with Foreword written by Dr. Robert Lichtenstern of Wien. It was published by D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., Bombay in 1935.

1936: Died in 1936 en-route from Mussoorie to Delhi on train due to a heart attack, where he had gone to see Nawab of Rampur who was his patient. Buried in the

premises of the Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi, the place he had devoted sixteen years of his life to.

In a short life span of fifty six years Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari packed in more work for the good of people than what others would in a century. He was a doctor par excellence, a pioneer surgeon, a Muslim whose heart bled for them, be they in Balkans or elsewhere and a national leader with a passion for the good of common man. On the political front he worked, and worked well, with the Muslim League, All India Congress and the Ahrar Movement. As an educationist he, along with Hakim Ajmal Khan and others, gave the Muslims of India a University in the shape of Jamia Millia Islamia.

***Surely, his deeds did indeed spoke louder than words.***

MOHAMMAD HAMID ANSARI  
ERUDITE SCHOLAR, LEADER  
QUINTESSENTIAL GENTLEMAN

Mohammad Hamid Ansari is currently the Vice-President of India. Steeped in family values and traditions, he is a true embodiment and representative of the family, and displays the same quest for knowledge, concern for the fellow humans and moral courage of the highest order that have been the hallmarks of the Ansaris of Yusufpur.

Hamid Ansari was born in Kolkata on April 1, 1937. He grew up in a family that had Politics in its blood. His father Abdul Aziz Ansari took active part in the Freedom Movement and was also a member of the Medical Mission to Turkey during the Balkan War. He is Grand-nephew of Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, President of the Indian National Congress in 1927 (Madras Session) and a front rank leader of the Freedom Movement.

Hamid Ansari is also the President of the Indian Institute of Public Administration and chancellor of Punjab University, Chandigarh. In his impressive career spanning over 50 years, he has worked in different disciplines in the offices of Government of India. A prolific writer, he has contributed in numerous news dailies and various print media. In 1984, he was



honoured with the Padma Shri Award by the Government.

Hamid Ansari had his early schooling from St. Edwards High School in Shimla. Thereafter he attended St. Xavier's College, and pursued B.A (Honours) and later M.A. in Political Science from Aligarh Muslim University. He was very fond of cricket and played as a right hand Batsman and also kept Wickets, as well as umpired in Matches at Aligarh. He is also an avid golfer and can be seen at the golf club in Delhi when he can spare time from his onerous official commitments.

After completing his Master's degree, he worked as a lecturer at the Aligarh Muslim University for two years. Thereafter, he appeared in the UPSC exam in 1961 and qualified with distinction. He then started his career as a Civil servant in the Indian Foreign Service.

He was a representative of India to the United Nations and Indian High Commissioner to Australia (1985-1989). He also served as an Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (1976-1979), Afghanistan (1989-1990), Iran (1990-1992) and Saudi Arabia (1995-1999). He had the honour of being India's permanent representative to the United Nations (1993-1995).

From 2000 to 2002, Hamid Ansari served as vice-chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University. He served as Chairman of Petroleum Ministry's Advisory

Committee on Oil Diplomacy for Energy Security from 2004 to 2005. He was appointed Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities (2006 – 2007). He was chairman of the working group on “Confidence building measures across segments of society in the State,” established by the Second Round Table Conference of the Prime Minister on Jammu and Kashmir in 2006. The report of the working group was adopted by the Third Round Table in April 2007. Among other things, the report advocated recognising the right of Kashmiri Pundits to return to “places of their original residence.” This right, it argued, should be recognised without any ambiguity and made a part of state policy.

On 11 August 2007, he took oath of office as the 13<sup>th</sup> Vice President of India. He was re-elected for the Second term on 7th August 2012 and made history on being only the second incumbent after Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan to have occupied this august office.

Mr. Ansari is well known for his role in ensuring compensation to the Gujarat riots victims and his approach for a complete alteration into the relief and rehabilitation work for the victims since 1984.

Hamid Ansari is a reputed West Asia scholar. He has authored a book ‘Travelling through Conflict’ and has also edited a book “Iran Today: Twenty Years after the Islamic Revolution”. He has written extensively on

Palestine, Iraq and Iran. Known for speaking, and writing as per his conscience, some of his views have run contrary to India's official position. However, the state has gracefully accepted his divergent views as he is known for his sincerity and intellectual honesty. Mr. Ansari was also a visiting Professor at the Centre for West Asian and African Studies in Jawaharlal Nehru University and at the Academy for Third World Studies in Jamia Millia Islamia.

He has written cogently on the Palestinian issue and has taken position often at variance to the official line on Iraq and Iran. In an article, "Alternative approaches to West Asian crises" (The Hindu, May 5, 2006), he advocated the need for simultaneous progress on Palestine, Iraq and Iran. In an earlier article, "*Et EU, India*," (Outlook, October 10, 2005), he questioned India's vote in the International Atomic Energy Agency on Iran's Nuclear Programme. He opined that though the Indian Government had claimed to have acted on "its own judgment", it was not borne out by facts.

Mohammed Hamid Ansari has carved out a unique position for himself as a bold and conscientious erudite leader, a prolific writer and a leading mind on West Asia. He can be truly called the doyen of Ansaris of Yusufpur in India and a great scholar of our generation.



Vice President Hamid Ansari receiving a photo of Indian nationalist leader Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari from speaker of the Grand National Assembly, Cemil Cicek in Ankara, Turkey.

## HAMID ANSARI RECEIVING PICTURE OF DR. ANSARI FROM THE HEAD OF TURKISH PARLIAMENT

## QUOTABLE QUOTES BY HAMID ANŞARI

“No citizen is apolitical as a citizen by definition has to take interest in public affairs.” He said when asked whether his being apolitical would help in the smooth conduct of the Rajya Sabha.

“The language used by the Pope sounds like that of his 12th-Century counterpart who ordered the crusades. It surprises me because the Vatican has a very comprehensive relationship with the Muslim world”.

“The EU had decided in September 2004 that "Iran cannot be allowed to conduct any part of the uranium enrichment process" irrespective of Article IV of the NPT. In subsequent negotiations, Iran, having "completed its structural capabilities in the fuel cycle sector", offered a voluntary suspension and the EU promised a guaranteed package of political, economic, security and technical cooperation. The package offered in August 2005, with US approval, fell short of it and was rejected; Hence the resort to pressure through an IAEA resolution.

“The crude game for domination (of Iran) was played by the US with the EU acting as an American surrogate. Was it necessary for us to become a surrogate's

surrogate? How often would we be asked to take the fidelity test”?

Excerpt from “ET EU, India” Published in ‘Outlook’ Of 10 October 2005.

## MOHAMMED HAMID ANSARI LIFE AT A GLANCE

1937 - Born on 01 April in Kolkata, India.

1959 - M.A. (Political Science) from Aligarh Muslim University (AMU).

1959 -60 - Lecturer, Department of Political Science, AMU.

1961 - Joined Indian Foreign Service by securing 4th position.

1976-80- Ambassador to United Arab Emirates, (UAE).

1980-85 - Chief of Protocol Officer, Government of India.

1984 - Awarded the Padma Shri.

1985-1989 - High Commissioner to Australia.

1989-1990 - Ambassador to Afghanistan.

1990-1992 - Ambassador to Iran.

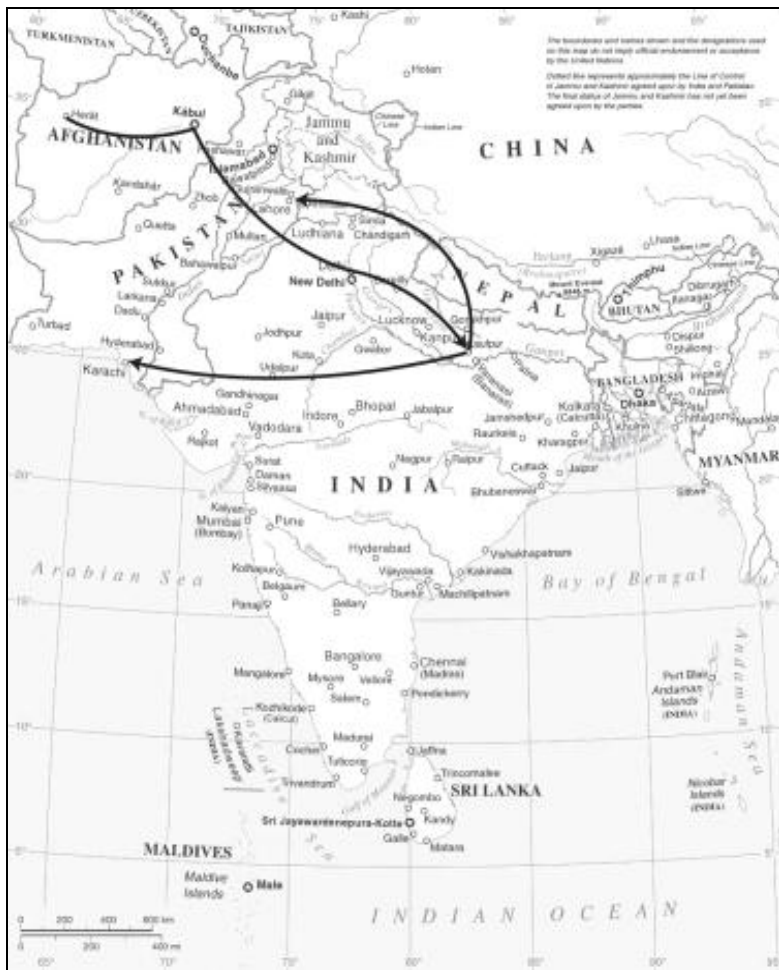
1993-1995 - Permanent Representative to the UN, New York.

1995-1999 - Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

1999-2000 -Visiting professor, Centre for West Asian and African Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

- 2000-2002 - Vice-Chancellor, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.
- 2002-2006 - Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi.
- 2003-2005 - Visiting professor, Academy for Third World Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.
- 2004-2006 - Co-Chairman, India-U.K Round Table Conference.
- 2004-2006 - Member, National Security Advisory Board.
- 2004-2005 - Chairman, Advisory Committee for Oil Diplomacy, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- 2006 -Chairman, Working Group on "Confidence building measures across segments of society in the State", established by the second Round Table Conference with the Prime Minister, Jammu and Kashmir issue, held at Srinagar.
- 2007 - Present - Becomes Vice-President of India and ex-officio Chairman, Rajya Sabha.
- 2012 - Re-elected Vice President for the second term. Created history being the only person other than Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan to do so.





**Move of Ansaris - Yusufpur (India) to Lahore and Karachi (Pakistan)**

## PARTITION OF INDIA ANSARS BECOME MUHAJIRS AGAIN

“We have undoubtedly achieved Pakistan and that too without bloody war and practically peacefully, by moral and intellectual force, and with the power of the pen, which is no less mighty than that of the sword and so our righteous cause has triumphed. Are we now going to besmear and tarnish this greatest achievement for which there is no parallel in the history of the world? Pakistan is now a fait accompli and it can never be undone, besides, it was the only just, honourable, and practical solution of the most complex constitutional problem of this great subcontinent. Let us now plan to build and reconstruct and regenerate our great nation...”

### *Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah*

August 14, 1947 the birth of the new Islamic Republic of Pakistan. India won its freedom from colonial rule at midnight the next day, ending nearly 350 years of British presence in India. When the British left, they partitioned India, creating separate countries i.e. India and Pakistan, to accommodate religious differences between Pakistan, which has a majority Muslim population, and India, which is primarily Hindu.

Whether the partition of these countries was wise or otherwise is not a subject of this book. However, it would be appropriate for the benefit of our generations to introduce the partition process and then proceed with the portraits of the Ansaris who chose to move to Pakistan.

### **Reasons for Partition**

By the end of the 19th century, several nationalist movements had emerged in India. While the Indian National Congress was calling for Britain to Quit India, in 1943 the Muslim League passed a resolution demanding that the British divide India and then quit. There were several reasons for the birth of a separate Muslim homeland in the subcontinent, and all three parties - the British, the Congress and the Muslim League - were responsible.

As colonizers, the British had followed a divide-and-rule policy in India. In the census they categorized people according to their religion and viewed and treated them as separate entities. They based their knowledge of the people on religious texts and the intrinsic differences they found in them, instead of examining how people of different religions had co-existed for so long.

The British were also fearful of the potential threat from the Muslims, who were former rulers of the

subcontinent, and had ruled India for over 300 years under different empires, most predominant being the Mughals. To win them over to their side, the British helped establish Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College at Aligarh and supported All-India Muslim Conference, both of which were institutions from which leaders of the Muslim League and ideology of Pakistan emerged. As soon as Muslim league was formed, Muslims were placed on a separate electorate. Thus, the separateness of Muslims in India was built into the Indian electoral process.

There was also an ideological divide between Muslims and Hindus. While there were strong feelings of nationalism, by late 19th century there were also communal conflicts and movements in the country based on religious identities rather than class or regional differences. Some people felt that the very nature of Islam called for a communal Muslim society. Added to this were the memories of power over Indian subcontinent that the Muslims had held, especially in old centers of Mughal rule. These memories might have made it exceptionally difficult for Muslims to accept imposition of colonial power and culture. Many refused to learn English and to associate with the British. This was a severe drawback as Muslims found that cooperative Hindus found better government positions and thus felt that the British favoured Hindus.

Consequently, social reformer and educator Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, who founded Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College, convinced the Muslims that education and cooperation with the British was vital for their survival in the society. However, tied to all movements of Muslim revival was the opposition to assimilation and submergence in the Hindu culture.

Hindu revivalists also deepened the chasm between the two nations. They resented the Muslims for their former rule over India. They rallied for a ban on the slaughter of cows, a cheap source of meat for the Muslims. They also wanted to change the official script from Persian to the Hindu Devanagri script, effectively making Hindi rather than Urdu the main candidate for the national language.

The Congress made several mistakes in their policies which further convinced the League that it was impossible to live in an undivided India after freedom from colonial rule because their interests would be completely suppressed. One such policy was the institution of "*Bande Matram*," a national anthem historically linked to anti-Muslim sentiment, in the schools of India where Muslim children were forced to sing it.

The Congress banned support for the British during the Second World War while the Muslim League pledged its full support, which found favour from the British, who

needed help of the largely Muslim army. The Civil Disobedience Movement and the consequent withdrawal of Congress party from politics also helped the league gain power, as they formed strong ministries in the provinces that had large Muslim populations. At the same time, the League actively campaigned to gain more support from the Muslims in India, especially under the guidance of dynamic leaders like Muhammad Ali Jinnah. There had been some hope of an undivided India, but rejection of the interim government set up under the Cabinet Mission Plan in 1942 by the Congress convinced leaders of Muslim League that compromise was impossible and partition was the only course of action open to them.

### **Impact of Partition on Ansaris of Yusufpur**

Partition left both India and Pakistan devastated. Mass movement of people on both sides of the divide claimed countless lives in riots, rapes, murders, and looting. Women were especially subjected to brutalities by the Hindus and Muslims.

Over six decades after partition, the two nations are still trying to heal the wounds inflicted during that calamitous period. They began their independence with ruined economies and lands without an established and experienced system of government. They lost many of their most dynamic leaders, such as Gandhi, Jinnah and

Allama Iqbal, soon after the partition. Pakistan had to later endure the independence of Bangladesh, once East Pakistan, in 1971.

However, the most significant impact on the Ansaris of Yusufpur was that their families were divided. Fathers were separated from sons, sisters from brothers. Tension and mistrust between the two countries made the situation even more difficult for the divided families, as visits became difficult and were fraught with bureaucratic hurdles. In the words of Abdul Malik Ansari, “Radcliffe Award line passed right through the centre of my home”.

However, Ansaris of Yusufpur did not migrate to Pakistan only on its inception. Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari, son of Hakim Nabeena Ansari, had moved to Lahore in the early Forties and had set up his ‘*Matab*’ at Nila Gumbad, in the vicinity of Anarkali Bazaar in Lahore. However, he was the only Ansari of Yusufpur located in the part of un-divided India that became Pakistan in 1947. With time, he became a legend in his own right and will be written about in detail.

NEIGHBOUR OF HAZRAT  
DATA GANJ BUKHSH  
HAKIM ABDUL QADIR ANSARI

Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari received his education in Hyderabad and Dehli, and was trained in the family's profession of '*Hikmat*' under the supervision of his legendary father, Hakim Nabina Ansari. He soon learnt and reached a level of expertise that met the exacting standards of his illustrious father. Since Hakim Nabina Ansari could not travel to Saudi Arabia every year to examine King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, he appointed his son Abdul Qadir Ansari for the task which was a mark of his confidence in his son's abilities. Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari performed 14 Haj pilgrimages as per that assignment and examined King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud every year. Each year he led the Haj delegation and was accorded royal protocol as the King's visiting physician.

Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari started practice in the pre-partition days in Lahore and became famous for his pulse reading and ability to cure the incurable. His home and *Matab* were located on the third floor of a building. It was difficult to go up. However, the line of patients usually came down all the way from the third floor to the street it was situated on.



True to the family traditions, he never differentiated between the rich and the poor. His patients included Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar, Governor of Punjab, Syed Maratab Ali Shah, a Minister in the Federal Government belonging to the famous billionaire 'Packages' family, and a host of other dignitaries of that era. Yet, the famous and ordinary, the rich and poor, all had to stand in line and wait for their turn. Such was his personality that nobody dared to speak to him unless he was spoken to. Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar always stood with his hands folded, and his head bowed. Someone asked him as to why he did so. He replied: "People know him as a Hakim, I know the lofty spiritual position he is perched on. That is why I stand with my hands folded".

Once Syed Maratab Ali Shah was in a hurry as he had to attend an important meeting. He approached Hakim Sahab to see him first. Hakim Sahab looked up and said "You are in a hurry. And these hundreds of people who are standing in line have taken a day off to come here? Stand in the line and wait for your turn, or else you may leave". Syed Maratab Ali Shah went back quietly and stood in line".

The author was only seven years old when he met Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari, known to us as Taya Jaan (father's older brother). We lived in Model Town, a suburb of Lahore, and quite a distance from Nila Gumbad, where his home and Matab were located. As we used to go to

see him almost every week, my father, Masood Ahmed Ansari, requested him to move to Model Town as well so that we could live close to each other. He smiled and replied: "I would have done so, but I have a friend in this vicinity and I meet him every week. That is why I do not move from here". My father replied: I am surprised that you have a friend. I have only seen your patients, but no friend. He smiled again and said: "Come over next Friday and I will introduce you to my friend".

Next Friday my father got ready and went to see him. After the clinic, he asked my father to accompany him for the Friday prayers. They went to the shrine of Hazrat Abul Hassan Ali Hajvairi, alias Hazrat Data Ganj Bukhsh, one of the most famous and revered saints of the Indian Sub-Continent. The shrine and the Masjid were located close to his residence. After the prayers, Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari asked my father to meditate (*Miraqaba*). After some time when they were ready to leave, he asked my father: "Did you meet my friend"? My father replied in negative. Next week the same routine was followed. This time my father, in his state of meditation, saw Hazrat Data Ganj Bukhsh. He started crying. On their way back Hakim Sahab asked the same question. My father wept and replied that he had seen the revered saint. Hakim Abdul Qadir said: "He is my only friend in Lahore. I do not move out of my present

location because of him”. Needless to say, my father never asked him to move to Model Town again.

Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari, even though highly affluent, lived a simple life. I can still recall his daily routine. He started his practice early and closed it at Zuhr prayers. He used to come up one floor to his home and cooked a sweet dish in a small pot on a Petromax stove. He then distributed it to the kids present there and then had his lunch. I can never forget the taste of what he cooked. It was always the tastiest sweet dish one could imagine. The food used to be served on the floor where a Dastarkhwan was spread for it. It was an experience for us as we normally ate at a dining table.

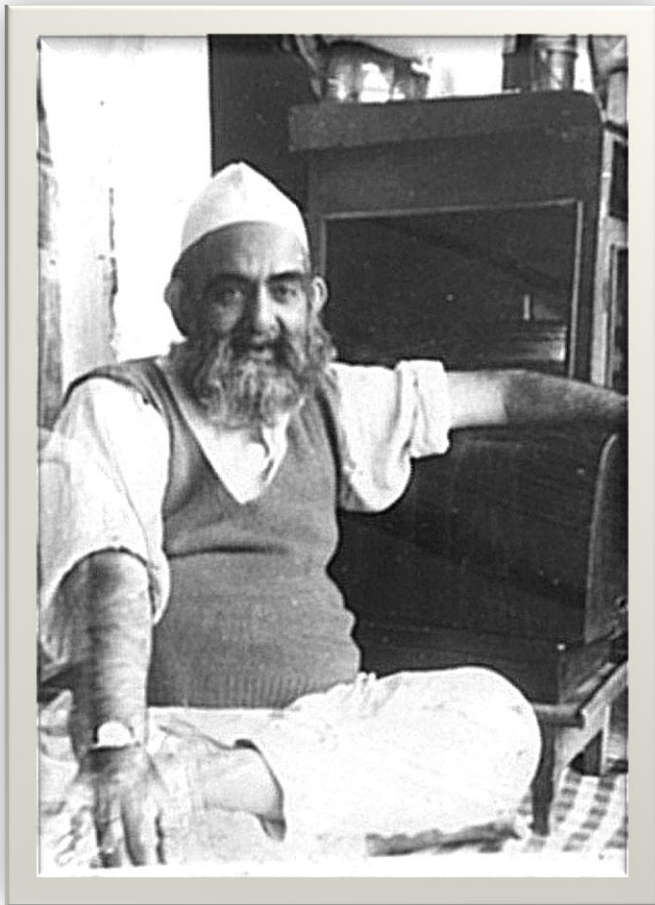
His ability to cure was legendary, his cures sometimes astonishingly simple. I could not take breakfast in the morning as I felt nausea. He diagnosed me as having swelling on the liver and asked my mother to give me a couple of dried figs to eat in the morning. I did that, and never had nausea in the morning again. My younger sister Nighat used to bleed through her nose profusely (Nakseer), and without provocation or notice. He prescribed “Paithay Ki Mithai” for her first thing in the morning. After a week of the treatment her bleeding bouts stopped and she never had that problem again.

Once, wife of Mian Saeed Sehgal, known to be the richest man in Lahore, brought her daughter to him straight out

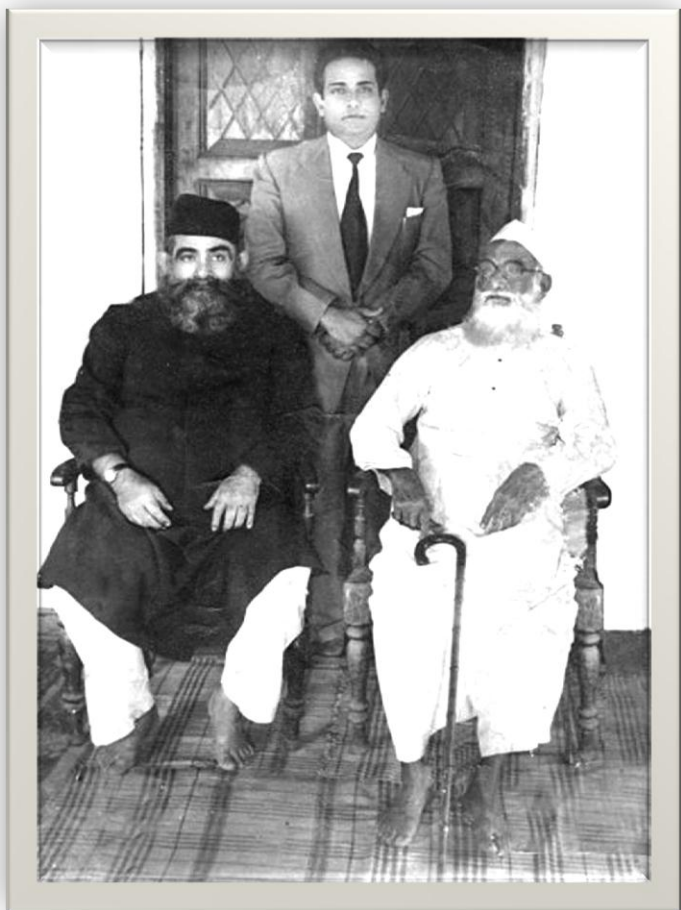
of the oxygen tent. He refused to treat her and said: “If anything happens to her, you people will blame me for it”. The lady cried and said: “We have taken her out of the oxygen tent as the doctors have given up hope. Please do whatever you can and we will not blame you for anything”. At that, he asked her to try and open the mouth of the girl and push a medicine down her throat with water. He said: “If the medicine gets in her system, you do not have anything to worry. If you cannot open her mouth, then her time of departure as appointed by Allah has come”. With great effort the medicine was administered to the semi-conscious girl. Hakim Sahab smiled and said. “Do not worry anymore. Give her the prescribed medicine and she will recover”. What he had said happened. The girl recovered fully in the next couple of weeks.

As a mark of gratitude, the lady visited Hakim Sahab and presented 5,000 Rupees, which in the fifties was considered a large sum. He smiled and said: “Two things have become known to me today. Firstly, the value of the life of the daughter of the richest man of this city is 5,000 rupees. Secondly, you think that human beings save lives. Lady, your daughter’s life was saved by Allah. Take this money and give it to a girls’ orphanage as a gesture of thanks to Allah All Mighty”. Wife of Mian Saeed Sehgal left with gratitude and tears in her eyes to do what she was asked to.

These few incidents narrated to the author by his father will throw some light on the spiritual stature and the curing powers of Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari. He came from a family where praying to Allah, practicing medicine and helping people were all extensions of the same, i.e. living in accordance with the will of Allah and teachings of his last Messenger, Muhammad Rasulullah (SAW). Indeed, he was one of those who really succeeded in this mortal world, and will Insha Allah be victorious on the Day of Judgment as well.



**Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari**  
**Son of Hakim Nabina Ansari**  
**Picture Taken in Lahore, Pakistan**



**Hakim Abdul Qadir Ansari (Sitting, left) Hakim Muhammad Ahsan Ansari (Sitting, right) and Masood Ahmed Ansari (standing) - Picture taken on the**

occasion of Hakim Muhammad Ahsan Ansari's visit  
to Pakistan



## THE MONTESSORIAN ANSARI ABDUS SALAM ANSARI

Abdus Salam Ansari was born in Delhi in 1918. He was the youngest son of Hakim Abdul Wahab Ansari, known as "Hakim Nabina" Ansari, who has been written about in detail in earlier chapters.

His father wanted him to become a religious scholar and attend Darul Uloom, Deoband, for the purpose. To prepare him for the same, he was tutored in classical literature, Science, history, Arabic, Persian and Urdu by hand-picked tutors specializing in those subjects. However, his uncle Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari wanted him to be educated in the modern sciences and become a doctor, like him, graduating from UK. Differing from the two, his mother refused to send her youngest son to a faraway land where it was impossible for her and his sisters to meet him. Thus, a compromise position was found and it was decided that the young Abdus Salam would study at the Aligarh University.

Abdus Salam graduated from the Aligarh Muslim University and worked in the Nizam State Railway, Hyderabad, India, for some time. On creation of Pakistan in 1947, he moved to Karachi and joined US Embassy as an Audio-Visual Advisor in the United States Information Service (USIS). During his 30 years'

service he met, and had meetings with, many notables. He attended formal dinners with the then US President Lyndon B. Johnson and the famous Hollywood legendary Film Director Cecil B. Demille. He made many documentary films in Pakistan. Of the many he made one was “The Silver Tide”, on the newly opened Fish Harbour in Karachi. Another documentary that became very popular, especially in Sindh, covered one of the famous Muslim saints, Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai. Both documentaries are archived at the Smithsonian Institution Museum in Washington.

In the 50's, during one of his trips to the US, while visiting a pre-primary school, he realized that there was no educational concept for two and a half to six years old children in Pakistan. Since love of teaching and learning was in his blood, he vowed to fill the gap one day.

On retirement from the US Embassy, he worked tirelessly towards the achievement of his goal. In the process, he met Mrs. Gool K. Minwalla, (who founded and became the president of Pakistan Montessori Association and AMI Montessori Teachers Training Centre) a pioneer educationist from Pakistan who had attended the Montessori course conducted by Dr. Maria Montessori. She interviewed Abdus Salam Ansari and approved his idea of making Montessori educational material.

To make his dream come true, he founded Educational Supply Corporation in 1955 and started manufacturing Nursery and Primary Schools educational training aids. Karachi Grammar School, Junior Section was the first school for which this educational equipment was manufactured. He studied the nature and methods of the Montessori philosophy of education and equipment and mastered the art of making these training aids to perfection.

The Montessori Teachers Training Centre, Karachi, associated with 'Association Montessori Internationale' (AMI - Holland) was highly impressed by the fine quality and workmanship of the Montessori material made to the International Standards. Thus, they appointed his Company the Sole Authorized Manufacturer of Montessori Apparatus for Pakistan.

His legacy still lives on. Now into the 21st century, Educational Supply Corporation, run by his son Salman Ahmed Ansari, is still engaged in manufacturing high quality Montessori apparatus of International Standards. They use the best quality wood, non-toxic paints and other related materials in manufacturing the educational equipment for Montessori environments. Schools throughout Pakistan, Middle East, Europe, Canada, USA and quite a few other countries of the world use their Montessori material.

Abdus Salam Ansari, the educationist, had another passion; unfathomable love and devotion for Allah's beloved last prophet Hazrat Mohammad Mustafa (SAW). He and his wife used to save from his earnings the whole year to take an annual trip to Makkah-e-Mukarramah and Madinah-e-Munawarra. Such was his love and devotion that he poured his heart out in a book he authored in Urdu on our beloved Rasulallah (SAW). The title of the book is "Noor Sey Noor Tuk" (From luminescence to luminescence). The book displays his total devotion and love for Allah's Last Messenger and remains popular amongst the travellers of the cherished path of love and devotion for Rasulallah (SAW).

Abdus Salam Ansari left this world for his permanent abode in 1996, leaving behind a son and three daughters. He was buried in the Gizri Graveyard, Phase V, Defence Housing Authority, Karachi, close to the grave of his beloved cousin brother, Masood Ahmed Ansari. May Allah bless his noble soul and may he receive blessings and support of Allah's most beloved Nabi on the Day of Judgment. Ameen!



**Abdus Salam Ansari**  
**The Montessorrian Ansari**

29  
A MOVIE STAR, A WRITER,  
A SUFI  
MASOOD AHMED ANSARI

When a son writes about his father, the general, and natural, tendency is to paint a picture larger than life. A son's love and respect and role model aspect of a father come in to play. The expressions become somewhat tainted with exaggeration and emotions take hold of an otherwise rational pen. In writing about my father, I will try to avoid these pitfalls and remain as objective as possible.

Also, since his professional life is adequately covered in an article published in a magazine and translated and reproduced in this book, I will concentrate on his human, rather than professional qualities.

He was born in 1922 in a family known for Sufi Shaikhs and Hakims. His grandfather was Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Ghafoor Ansari (RA), a revered Sufi Shaikh of Yusufpur known for his piety and spiritual leadership, having thousands of followers.

He lost his father, Hakim Mohammed Hassan Ansari, when he was only two years old. His world of affluence and high stature came crashing down even before he could get used to it. His father died in Gorakhpur in mysterious circumstances. He was performing Wudu for

prayers when he started bleeding through his nose and died shortly thereafter.

His mother, Anwari Begum, daughter of a Kirmani Syed Muslim Scholar, young and insecure, fled to Agra to her ancestral home to protect her son for any possible untoward incident. Hakim Muhammad Hassan Ansari, besides being a well-known Hakim, was also the trustee of a lot of properties given to him to be used in charitable pursuits. His personal land holdings, when added to the assets held in trust, had accumulated and become a sizable portfolio. Before leaving for her ancestral home, she handed over all property documents to Maulvi Subhanullah, a relative and fabulously rich person of Yusufpur.

Born in the lap of affluence and luxury, little Masood had to taste poverty at a tender age. He grew up on the streets of Agra and developed street smarts and survival skills. While still in his teens, he moved to Bombay to make a career and look after his mother and sister. Luck smiled at him and he was chosen, due to his good looks, for small roles in the films being made there. His character and talent attracted the top film Directors of that era and he soon became a rising star.

Whereas destiny had chosen him to play leading roles in movies, his blood and lineage dictated him to wander in pursuit of the real truth, gnosis. In an industry steeped in

glamour and the vices that go with it, he was lucky to find like-minded senior friends to guide him. Yaqub, a legendary character actor and Ashraf of the film 'Roti' fame, became his fellow wayfarers on the path to find the ultimate truth. Through them he was fortunate to become a disciple of the first Sufi Master he was lucky to find. Thus the trio, Yaqub, Ashraf and my father spent their nights on movie sets working to earn a living and spent their days in prayers and supplications, guided by their revered Murshid.

His Murshid was located in Lahore. The three disciples were located in Bombay. However, time and distances roll up in such relationships and become meaningless. The Murshid kept an eye on his disciples, protecting them from the evil around, and coaching them to get closer to the real light. As a result of his guidance, they were saved from the vices and their devastating results. Instead, they worked hard and concentrated on their professions. As a result, all three became legends in their own right.

On Partition, my father moved to Pakistan. At that time, Pakistan film industry was in its embryonic stage. He worked hard and soon became the leading star of the Pakistani Silver Screen.

The conflict between his lineage and profession that raged constantly in his mind was apparent in his life



style. His friends were Sufis, writers and poets. Imtiaz Ali Taj, Shaukat Thanvi, Saadat Hassan Manto and other intellectuals of that era were his friends in Lahore. He had been permitted by Josh Malihabadi, the legendary poet, to craft poetry. While he sought and enjoyed the company of intellectuals and spiritually rich, he avoided the cinema related crowd and discouraged them from visiting him at home. He strictly forbade us to develop any liking for the film industry. He repeatedly told us “I became an actor because I did not have a father. Therefore, as long as I am alive, you will not join this profession”. Of the three sons, the oldest, Maqsood Ahmed Ansari became CEO of an Advertising Agency and is now Chairman of the Pakistan Cancer Foundation. I chose to be an Army Officer, and my younger brother Mukarram Ansari became a doctor. We dared not offend our father by disobeying him.

His physical strength was proverbial. I have seen him lifting a person and throwing him at least eight feet away. He was almost fifty years old at that time. Once he was trying to fix a bedside lamp when he got electrocuted. He asked my mother to turn off the switch. She panicked and in trying to do so, fell. When he realized she would not be able to turn it off, He gripped the electric wire in both hands and broke it, all while still being electrocuted. The electricity current was 220 volts.

When he returned from work and approached our home, he used to honk twice. The servants of homes on the entire lane we lived usually disappeared, lest something would displease him. I asked him once the source of his physical strength. He smiled and replied: “When you lose your father at a young age, you learn to fend for yourself quickly to compensate for the absence of support structure.

He had a natural dislike for property and material things. He never built a home. He always educated us on the ills of wealth. One saying he oft repeated was: “Wealth is like a snake. It is in its nature to bite. If it doesn’t bite you, it will bite your brother, your sister, your wife or your children. When the poison takes effect, the person goes mad. The best way to avoid that is to throw it out of your home. Then and only then you will be able to save yourself from its ill effects”.

He wrote beautiful poetry. One of my favourite verses, that in my youth and zeal to gain popularity as an “intellectual” within my circle of friends, I presented as my own by substituting his name with mine, is:

*Hamdam-e-Daireena Kyun Hum Sey Khafa Baithay  
Hain Aap?*

*Kiya Hui Hum Seh Khata Jo Pur Jafa Baithay Hain App?  
Door Reh Kar Tou Suna Tha Aur Barhta Hai Lagao,  
Door Ho Kar Aur Bhi Kuch Kuj Ada Baithay Hain Asp.*

*Haan Tahi Daman Sahi, Laikin Mohubbat Thi Zuroor,  
Aap Ko Kiya Ilm Kiya Naimat Ganwa Baithay Hain Aap.*

Since his Murshid had died a long time ago, he longed to find another guide, and used to see an image of a saint in his dreams. One day he mentioned it to a friend, who invited him to meet his Murshid. My father agreed. At night when he entered the hall and looked towards where the revered saint was sitting, surrounded by his disciples and devotees, he immediately realized that it was the same person he had been seeing in dreams. The revered saint also looked up, smiled and said: 'I was waiting for your arrival', instantly confirming the belief that in such matters, time, distance and words do not matter. The saint was Hazrat Baba Zahin Shah Taji (RA), a Khalifa in the 'world' of Baba Tajuddin Auliya Nagpuri. My father remained very closely attached to Baba Sahab till his departure from this mortal World. He was now Masood Ahmed Ansari Zahini Taji.

He met an automobile accident in 1981 and was paralyzed. By that time, this world had lost its charm for him anyway. He lived for ten more years, and died in December 1991. He was buried in the Gizri Graveyard at Defence Housing Authority, Karachi. That was, incidentally, the year I had returned to Pakistan from Canada. The same year my youngest sister had also died in August, and then my father passed away in December.

*It seemed that I had returned to Pakistan to bury my dead.*



**MAŞOOD AHMED ANSARI  
RECITING A MANQABAT**

## SHINING STARS OF YESTER YEARS HANDSOME HERO MASOOD - NOW BUSY IN PRAYERS

*Translation of a feature on Film Star Masood published in the Weekly "Akhbar-e-Jahan", Karachi, Pakistan, of 14<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1985.*

Pakistan's film industry received a lot of strength in its early days from the Directors and Actors who migrated from India. The artists who sacrificed their established positions for the love of Pakistan and moved here were experienced and well known entities. Masood was one of those stars.

Masood was known as the 'Handsome Hero' in India. He was cast with famous actors of those days. He performed with poise and confidence and came to be known as a successful name in the Bombay Industry.

Masood was born in 1922 in a religious and highly enlightened family of UP. His family was considered a bastion of knowledge and piety, thus he was brought up in accordance with their traditions. His father was an enlightened and famous Hakim (physician) who ensured the right environment for the grooming of his son.

However, Masood, unlike other members of his family, developed a taste for movies. This liking grew to the

extent that he ended up in Bombay, seeking a career as an actor. Leading stars of the film industry in those days were Ashok Kumar, Motilal, Prithvi Raj, Surinder and Shyam. Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar were in the initial stages of their careers.

After appearing in a few minor roles, Masood was chosen to play the leading role in S.M. Yousuf's "Girhasti". The cast included seasoned and established actors such as Salochna Chatterji, Yaqub and Mirza Musharraf.

"Girhasti" proved to be a super hit movie. With its success, Masood became a well-known name in the Bombay Film Industry and throughout India. He then appeared in Habib Sarhadi's "Zaivaraat" against Meena Shori and Yaqub and gave a stellar performance. Thereafter, hit after hit like 'Dil Ki Basti', 'Naik Parveen', 'Daivar' 'Nateeja' and 'Balam' made him one of the most successful actors of his time.

When Masood was at the peak of his fame, Pakistan came in to being. He thought about moving to the new born country for some time and then decided that it was best for him to do so. He moved to Pakistan in 1949.

Pakistan film industry was in its embryonic stage at that time. However, a few movies had been made. Film producers welcomed his move to Pakistan and called it a good omen for the infant industry. He was immediately

cast in a number of movies. His first movie was 'Ghairat' in which he starred against Sabiha. 'Ghairat' was released on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1951 and became his first movie in Pakistan.

Thereafter, he appeared with Sabiha in Amin Malik's 'Pinjra', followed by 'Shola' and 'Harjai'. Thereafter, he again appeared with Sabiha in the leading roles in 'Sailab', 'Barkha' and 'Sharary'.

Those were the days when Masood, Santosh Kumar and Sudhir were the three top ranking heroes of the Pakistan Film Industry. He then appeared in 'Intikhab', a big cast film made in Karachi with a new find Jameela Razzak in the lead. Nayyer Sultana was also introduced in that film. Thereafter he appeared in 'Sauteli Maan' with Swaran Lata and with Yasmin in A. Shah Shikarpuri's 'Haqeeqat'.

He started his own film 'Zanjeer' in 1960. He played the leading role and was the Director as well. The movie did not click at the box office. He was dejected at this failure and moved to Karachi. He established a documentary and advertising film making Company (Filmites) and made quite a few documentaries. However, he got fed up with the general work environment and abandoned the film industry completely.

For the last ten years he has totally devoted himself to prayers and supplications. He has now become a bearded, saintly person whose hands are continuously in

motion with the rosary. He has secluded himself from the worldly activities and devotes all of his time in the service of Allah.



**HANDSOME HERO MASOOD - A  
PORTRAIT**





## EPILOGUE

The odyssey of transferring over four thousand years' history of the Ansaris of Yusufpur to paper is over.

This book is not about crafting something new. The purpose is neither to entertain, nor to propound. The only reason for writing it is to first produce 'the rosary effect' by bringing all Ansaris of Yusufpur together where ever we are and then provide a lasting bridge to our past so that our future generations can acquire knowledge of their roots and draw inspiration from our history and heritage.

A bridge to the past is important. It is indeed this bridge that allows us to dream about the rainbows we would ride in future, go to lands unseen, reach the summits unconquered, sail over waters uncharted, and hopefully carve out a place of distinction for ourselves. I hope this book would help our current and future generations to know their past and derive vision and faith from it when they begin their own journeys and odysseys.

There is another, and more important, reason to build this bridge. It is this very bridge that allows us to learn about the faith, strengths and qualities of our ancestors that made them successful in this mortal world and, In Sha Allah, in the hereafter. I hope this book will motivate us to follow their footsteps and live our lives in

accordance with what Allah All Mighty has sent us here for and what our beloved last Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (SAW) has taught us. Even if one of us decides to follow that path, the purpose of writing this book would have been achieved.

One last thing! Now that the boat I had sailed on in this odyssey lies moored awaiting my next journey, which could well take me from this mortal world to the next, I request the readers to pray to Allah the most Kind, the Most Merciful, to forgive this sinner and bestow upon him the intercession and support of our beloved last & final Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (SAW) on the Day of Judgment. Ameen!!

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81.

# FAMILY TREE (SHIJRA-E-NASAB) OF ANSARIS OF YUSUFPUR



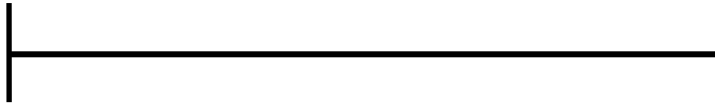
## FAMILY SEALS IN ARABIC & PERSIAN REPRESENTING DIFFERENT PERIOD AND REGIONS OF RESIDENCE



## Family Tree (Shijra-e-Nasab) - Ansaris of Yusufpur

1. Abul Bashar Hazrat Adam
2. Hazrat Shies (AS)
3. Hazrat Anoosh (AS)
4. Hazrat Qayan (AS)
5. Hazrat Mehlayel (AS)
6. Hazrat Eizad (Yard)
7. Hazrat Idris (Akhnooh)
8. Hazrat Mutvashalkh
9. Hazrat Malik (Lamak)
10. Hazrat Noah (Shakar)
11. Hazrat Saam
12. Hazrat Aram
13. Hazrat Shalekh
14. Hazrat Hood (Aber)

Hazrat Hood [Aber)



Faligh (Faneh Ancestor of Quraish)

Arghua (Ancestor of Bani Israel)

Sarogh

Nahoor

Tarikh (Alias Azir Sculptor in the period of Namrood)

Qahtan

## Hazrat Ibrahim (AS)

Hazrat Ismail | (AS)

Hazrat Ishaq

Quizar  
Tahammal  
Sabit  
Salman  
Hamiya  
Marvad  
Udd  
Adnan  
Maad  
Nazaar Abu Rabiya  
Muzar  
Ilyas  
Amir or Madarka  
Khazima  
Kanana  
Nazar Quais  
Malik  
Fahrab (Ancestor of Hazrat Abu Ubaida)  
Ghalib  
Lawae (Ancestor of Bani Khazina)  
Kaab (Ancestor of Farooqis)  
Marrah (Ancestor of Bani Makhzoom)  
Kulab (Ancestor of Siddiquies)  
Qasa or Zaid  
Abde Manaf (Ancestor of Usmanis)  
Umro  
Abdul Muttalib  
Abdullah

Nabit  
Taiman  
Hamil  
Qahtan (Ancestor of Ansars)  
Yarub  
Yashjab  
Saba (Abd-e-Shams)  
(Cont. on Next Page)

**Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa Rasulullah (SAWS)**



Abd-e -Shams (Saba Akbar)



Humair

Kahlan

Zaid



Hamiya  
Aiman  
Zuhair  
Ureeb  
Fatan  
Ghaus  
Vail  
Jasham  
Maviya  
Qais  
Umro

Qazaa  
Alhani  
Imran  
Aslam

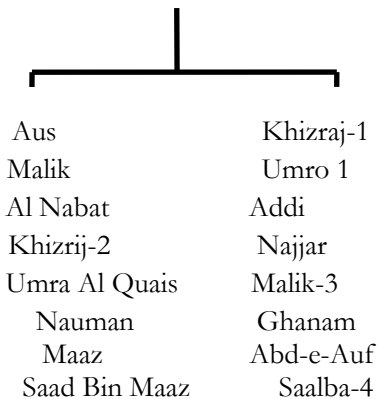


Malik-1  
Nabit  
Ghaus  
Uzad  
Maazan  
Saulba-1  
Bahlol (Umralsqais)  
Harsa-1  
Umro Bin Amir  
Saulba  
Harsa-2

Ureeb  
Yashjab

Sahal  
Zahdul Jamhoor  
Kahafazzulam  
Saba Asghar  
Saighi  
Qais Sani  
Haris  
Eilee Shrah  
Zi Jadal  
Zi Shrah  
Queen Sheeba  
(W/o King Solomon)

Harsa-2



Kulaib

Zaid

**KHALID BIN ZAID ABU AYYUB ANSARI R.A.**

Abu Mansoor Ummat-ul-Ansari  
Mansoor  
Jafar  
Ali Ansari  
Ahmed  
Muhammad  
Ali Abu Maad  
Khwaja Abu-Mansur Muhammad Balkhi,

## Khwaja Abu Mansoor Mohammed Balkhi

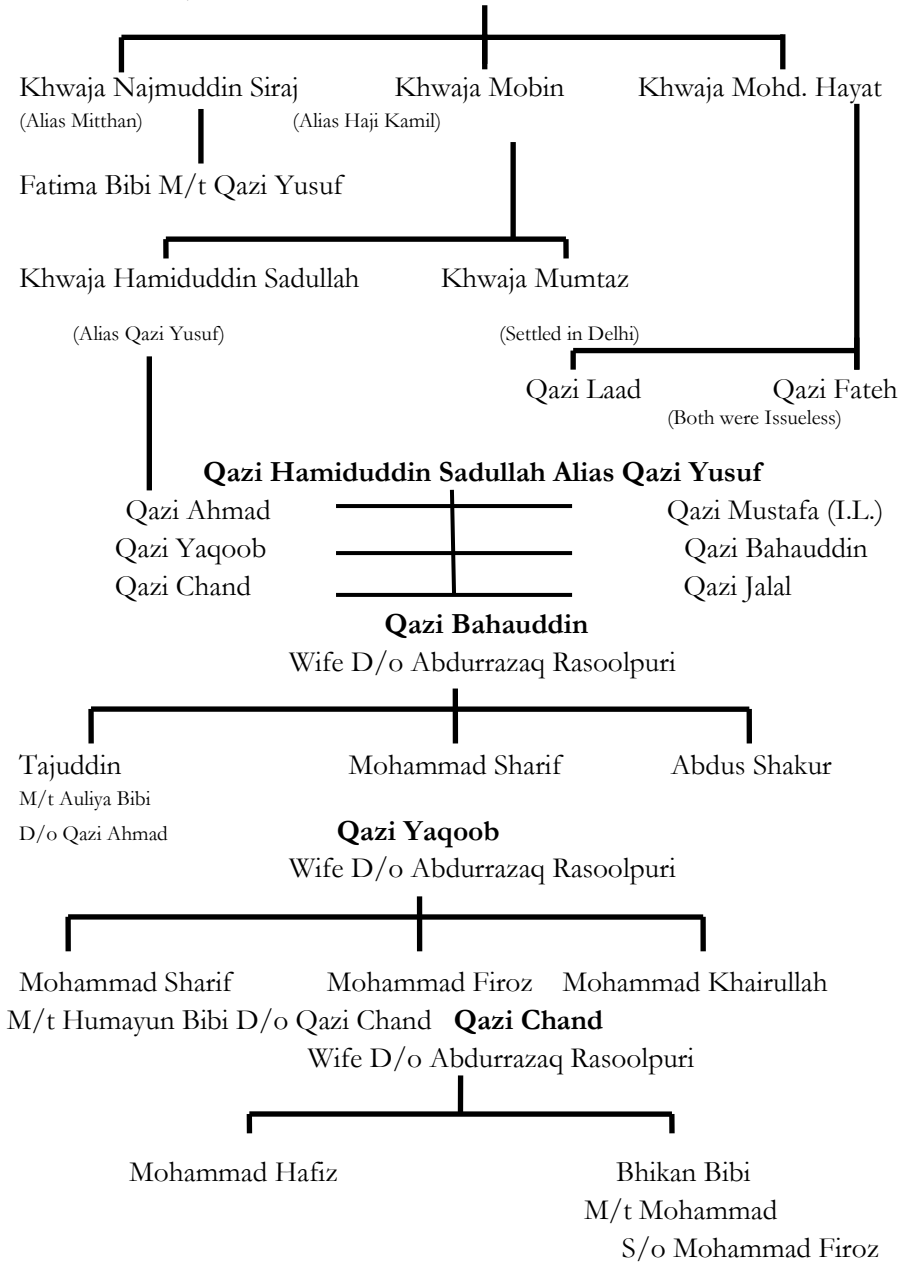
Abu Ismail Abdullah (Peer-e- Herat)

Ubaidullah

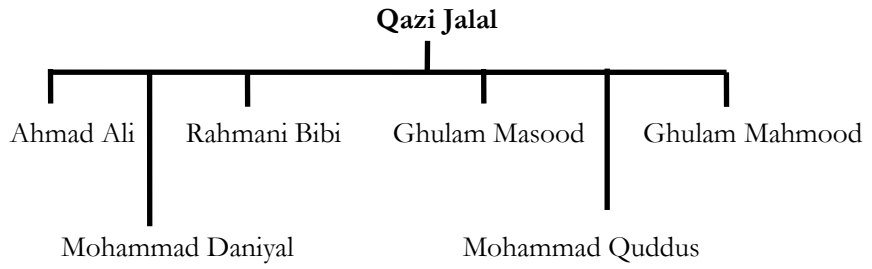
- └─ Khwaja Jabir -Ancestor Ansaris of Firangi Mahal Lucknow.
- └─ Khwaja Abdurrahman -Ancestor Ansaris of Yusufpur
- └─ Khwaja Hashim Buzurg -Ancestor Ansaris of Aligarh.
- └─ Qazi Mohd Yusuf -Ancestor Ansaris of Saharanpur.
- └─ Qazi Mohd Naimat –Ancestor Ansaris of Kakori.

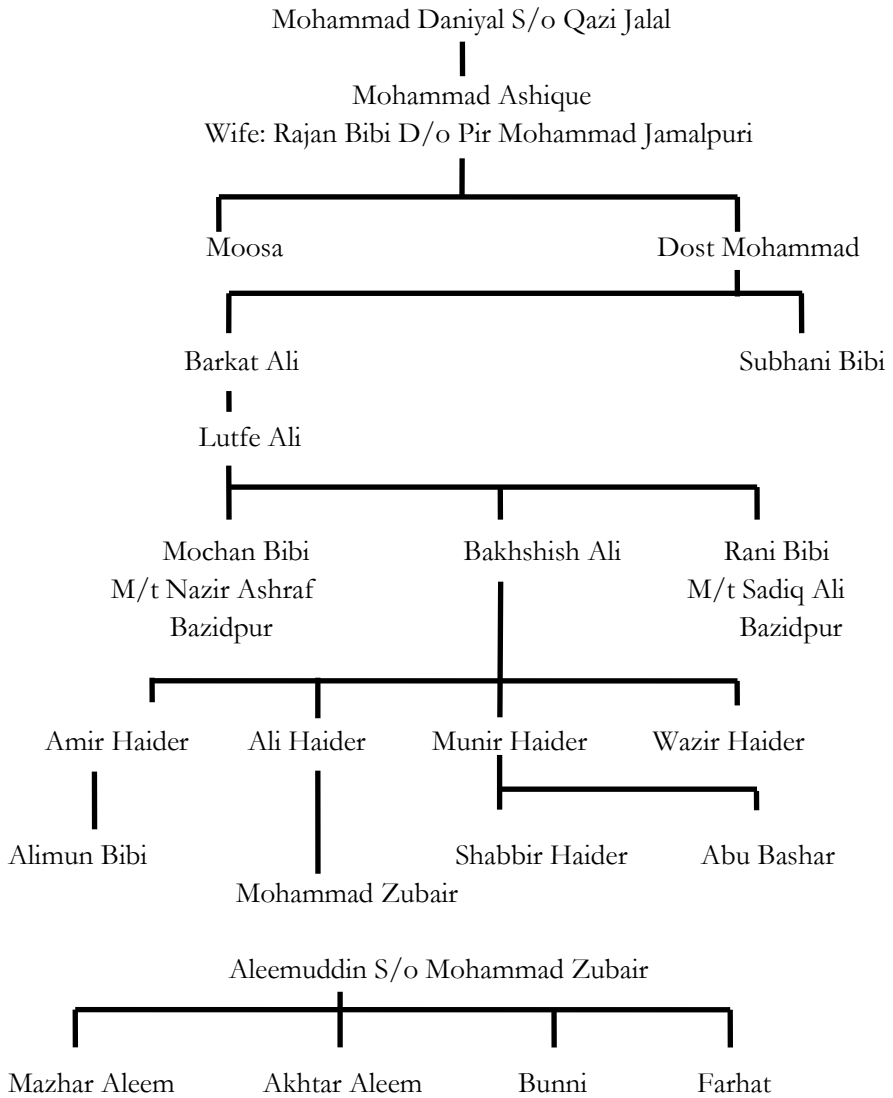
1. Khwaja Abdurrahman
2. Khwaja Ahmad
3. Khwaja Mohammad Danishmand
4. Khwaja Mohammad Jalal
5. Khwaja Alauddin
6. Khwaja Mohammad Kafi Danishmand
7. Khwaja Abdurraza
8. Khwaja Jalal
9. Khwaja Mohammad Maroof
10. Khwaja Mohammad Yusuf
11. Khwaja Dawood Baghdadi
12. Khwaja Burhanuddin
13. Khwaja Mohammad Nasiruddin
14. Khwaja Sharfuddin
15. Khwaja Malik Naiman
16. Khwaja Nasiruddin
17. Khwaja Hasan
18. Khwaja Abi Mohammad
19. Khwaja Ahmad
20. Khwaja Badruddin
21. Khwaja Fariduddin
22. Khwaja Mohammad
23. Khwaja Mohammad Hasan
24. Khwaja Sadullah

## 25. Khwaja Shaikh Hamiduddin Sadullah

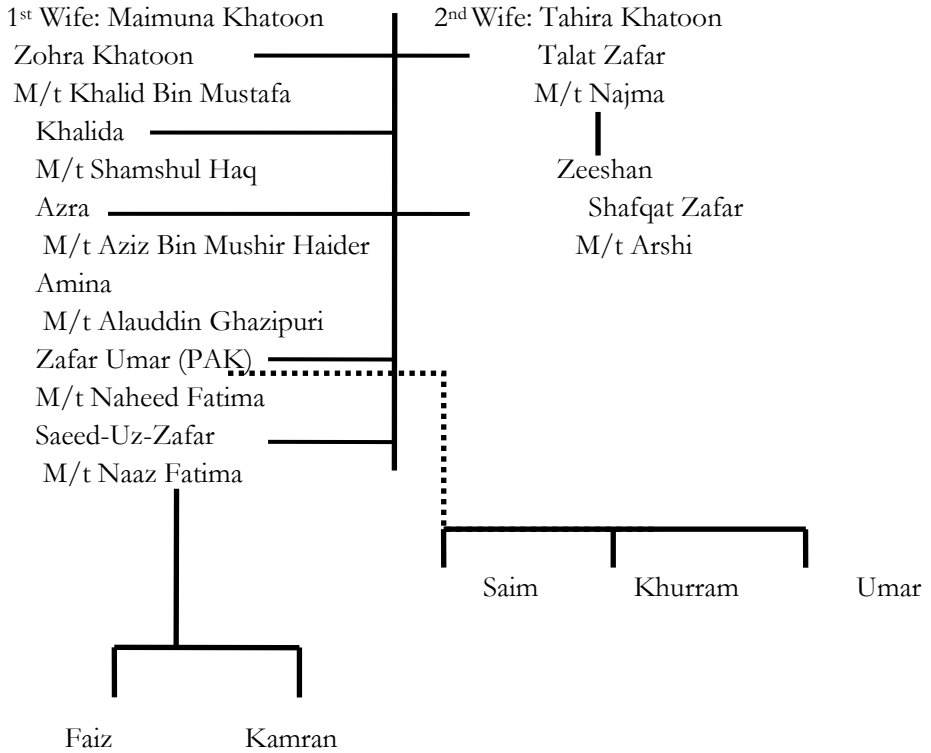


**Note: Qazi Chand's Family Merged into Qazi Yaqoob's Family**

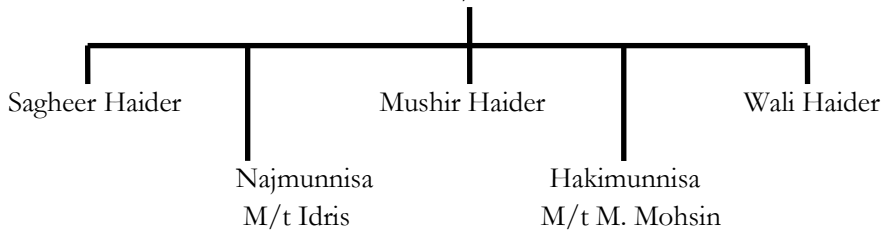




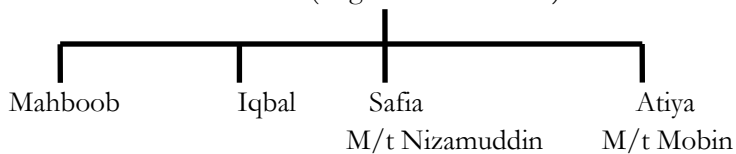
Abu Zafar S/o Abu Bashar



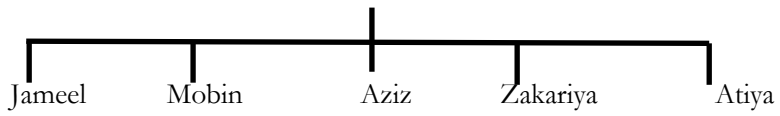
Wazir Haider S/o Bakhshish Ali



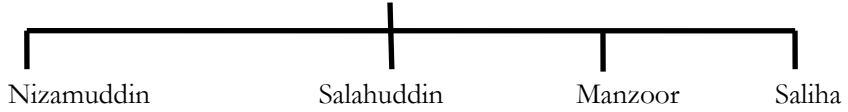
Sagheer Haider S/o Wazir Haider  
(Migrated to Pakistan)



Mushir Haider S/o Wazir Haider  
(Migrated to Pakistan)

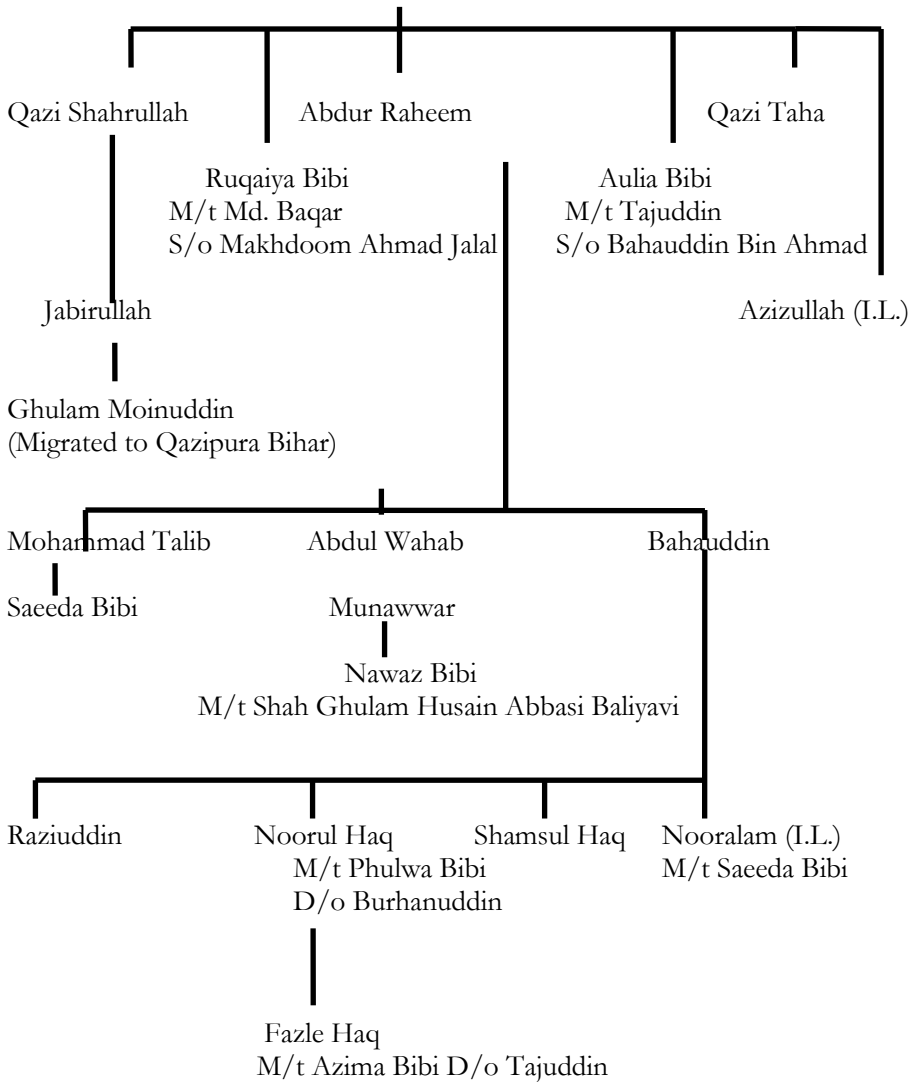


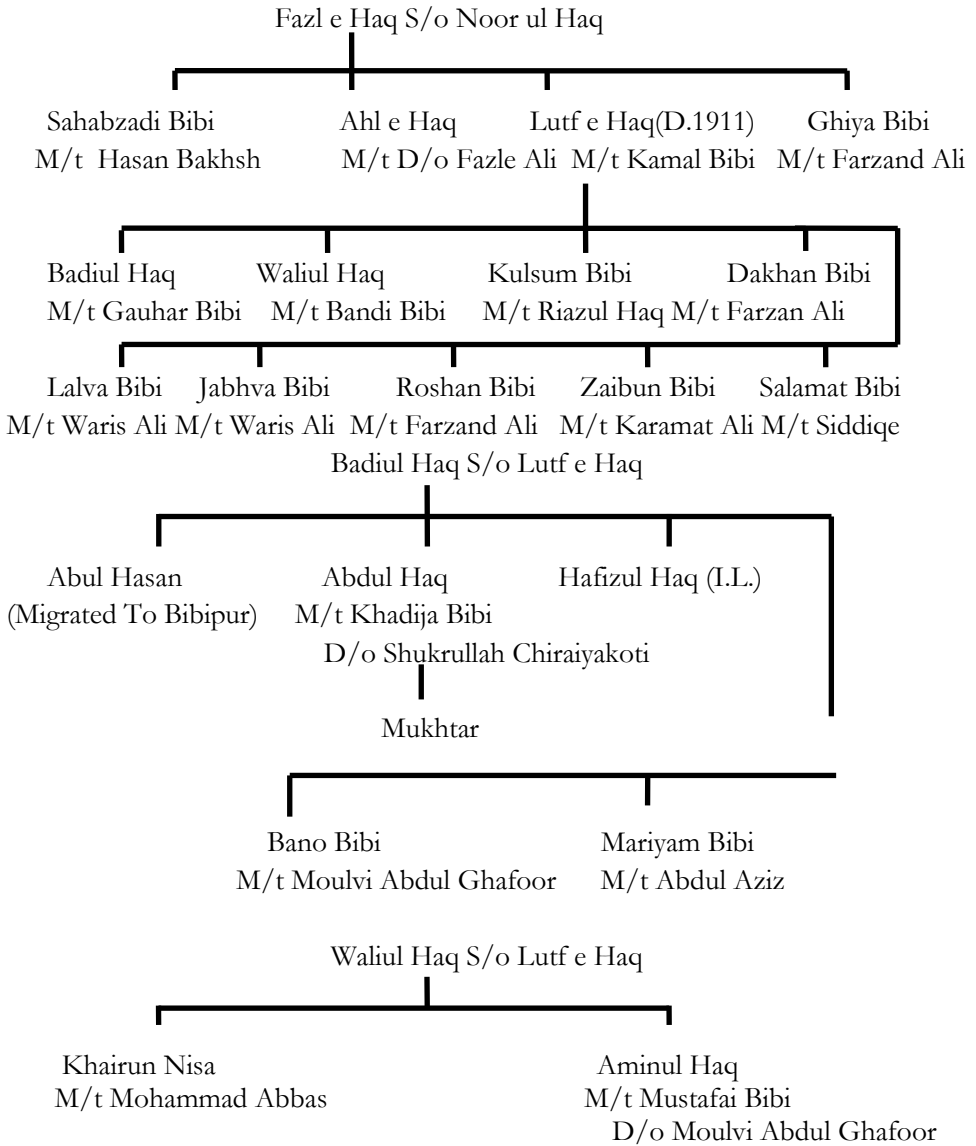
Wali Haider S/o Wazir Haider  
(Migrated to Pakistan)



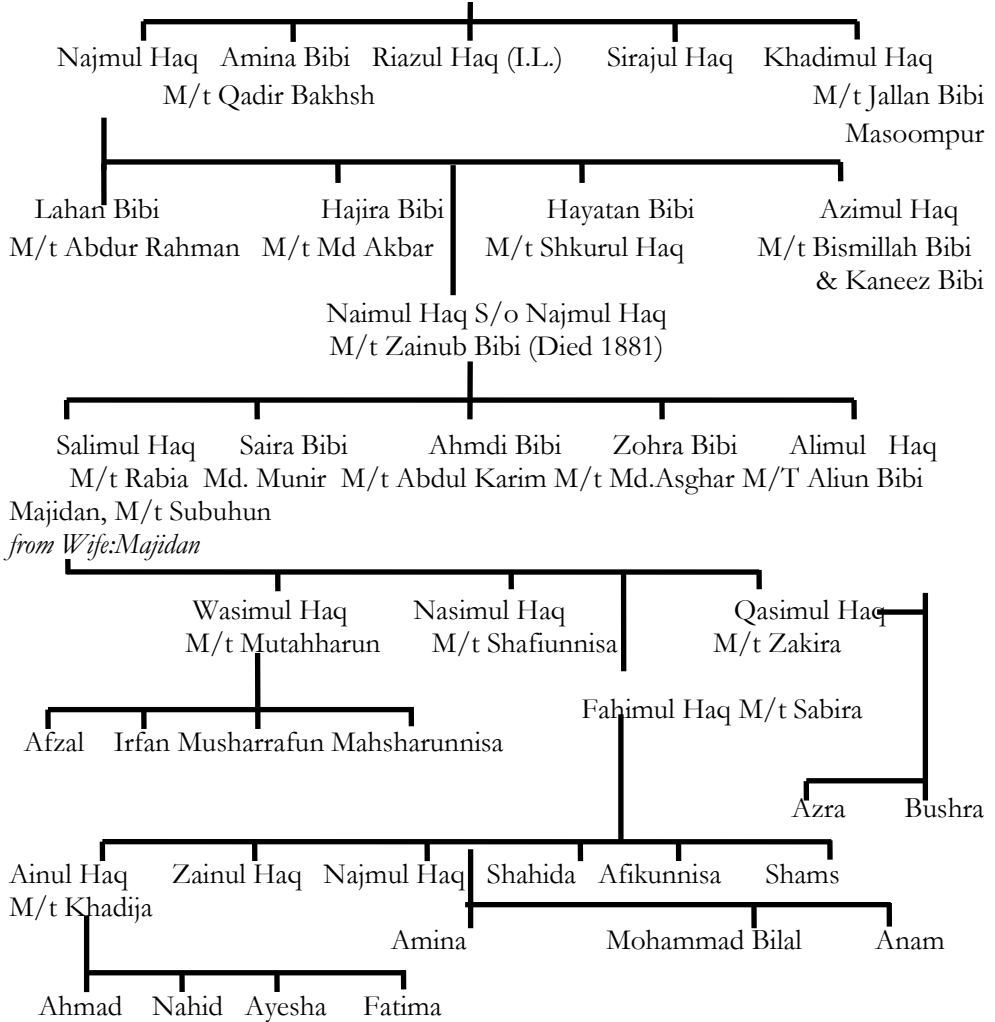


Qazi Ahmad S/o Qazi Yusuf

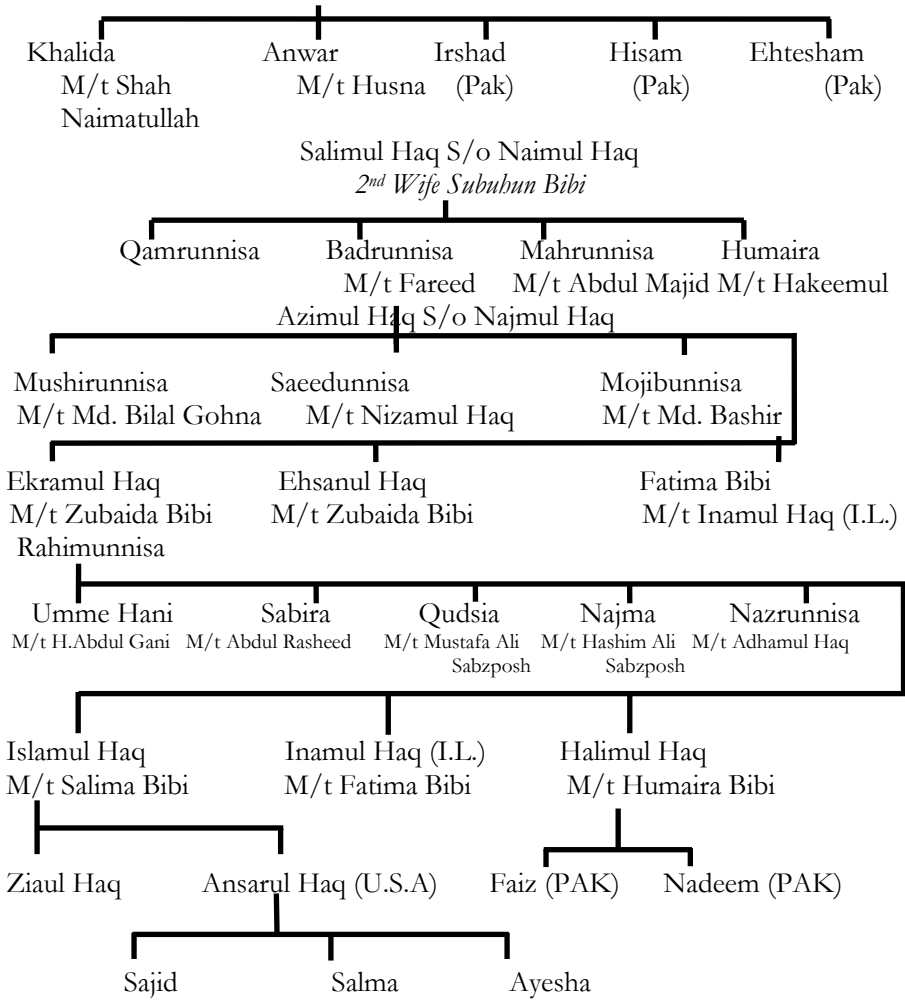




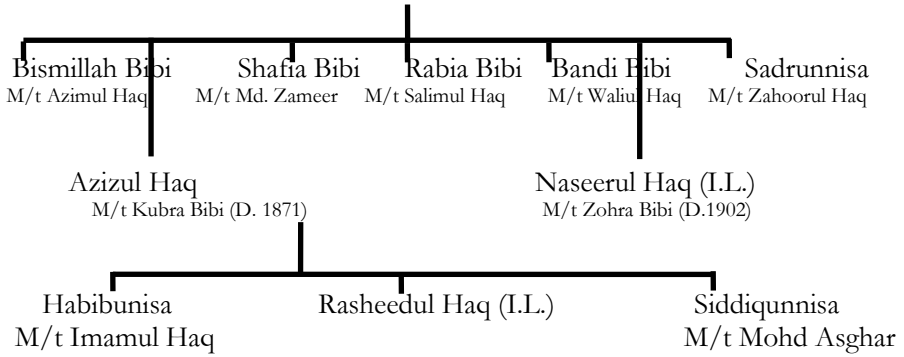
Ahl e Haq S/o Fazl e Haq



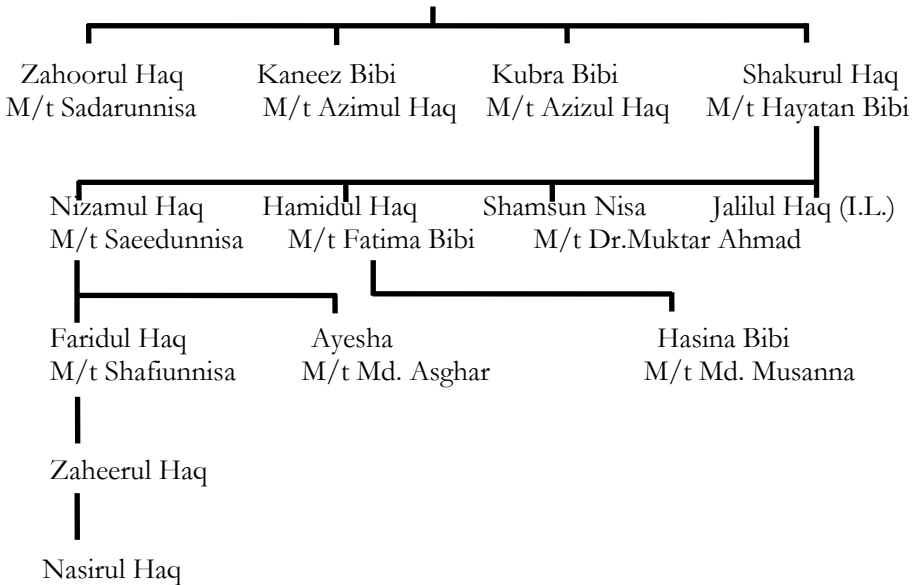
Nasimul Haq S/o Salimul Haq



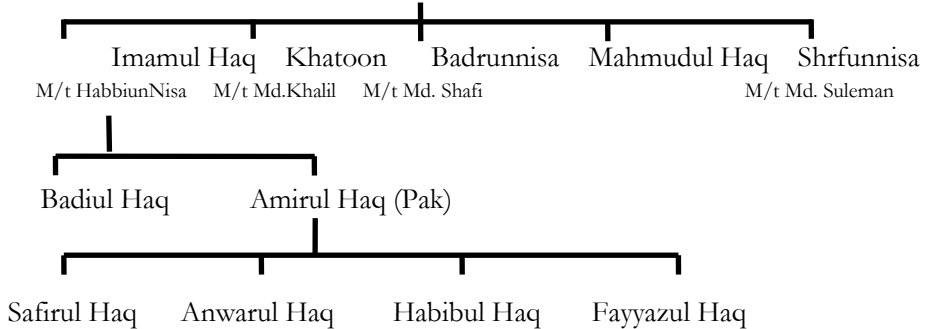
Sirajul Haq S/o Ahle Haq  
M/t Jhana Bibi, Salima Bibi (Died 1868)



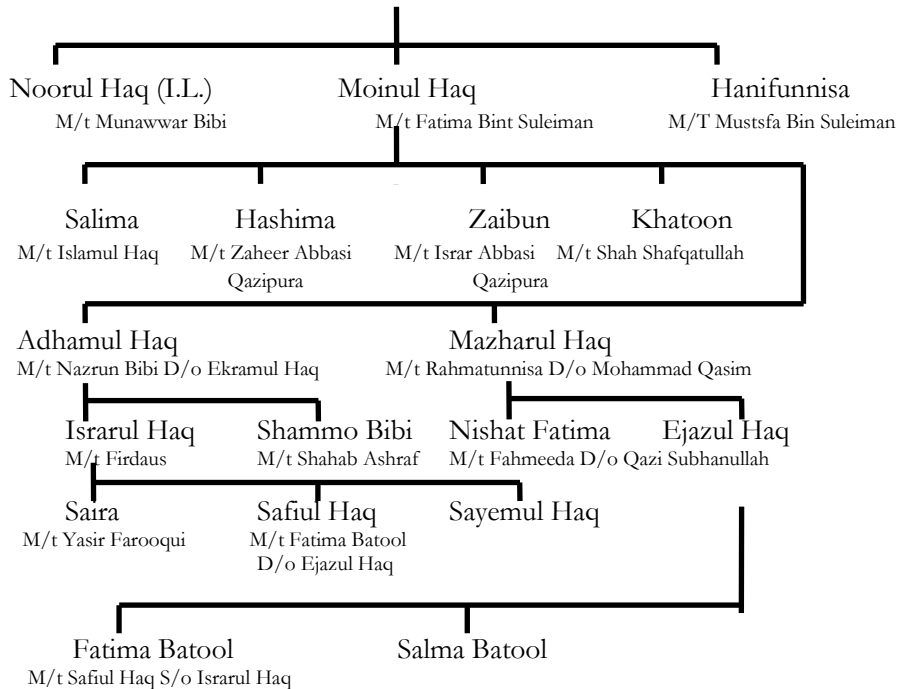
Khadimul Haq S/o Ahle Haq  
M/t Jallan Bibi

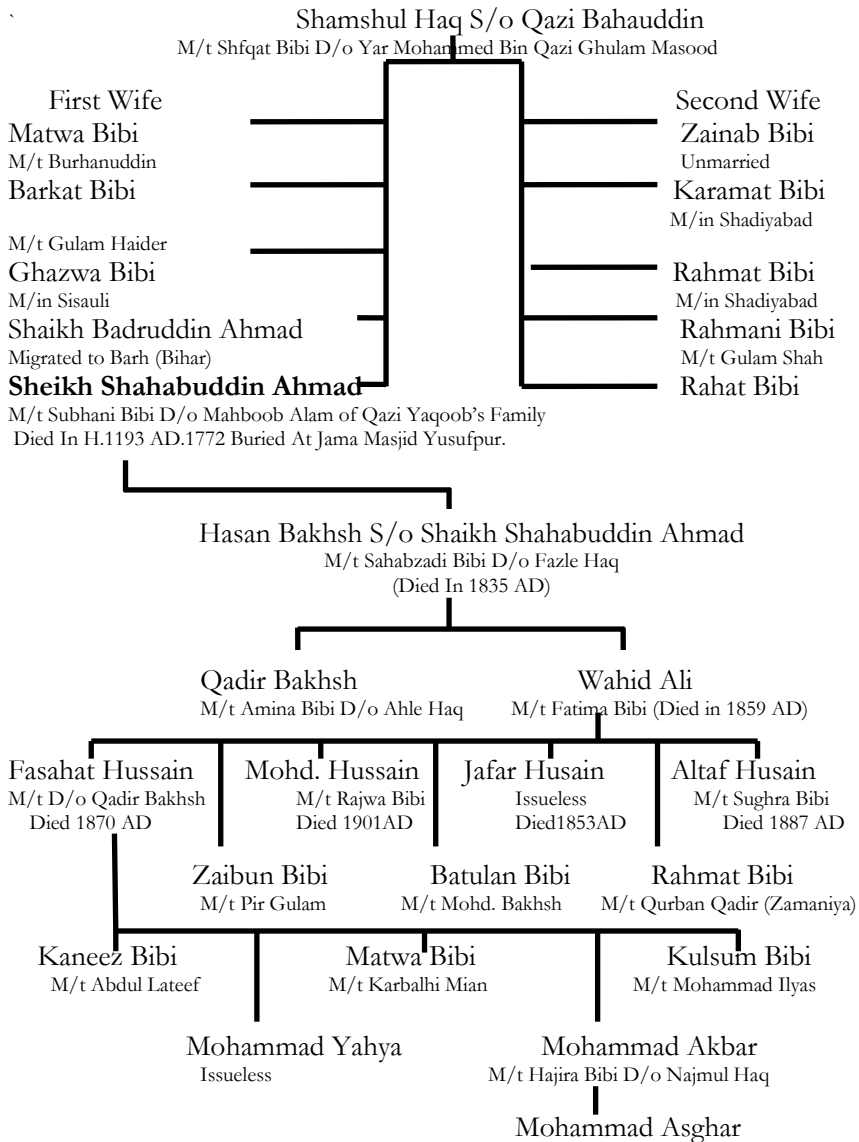


Zahoorul Haq S/o Khadimul Haq

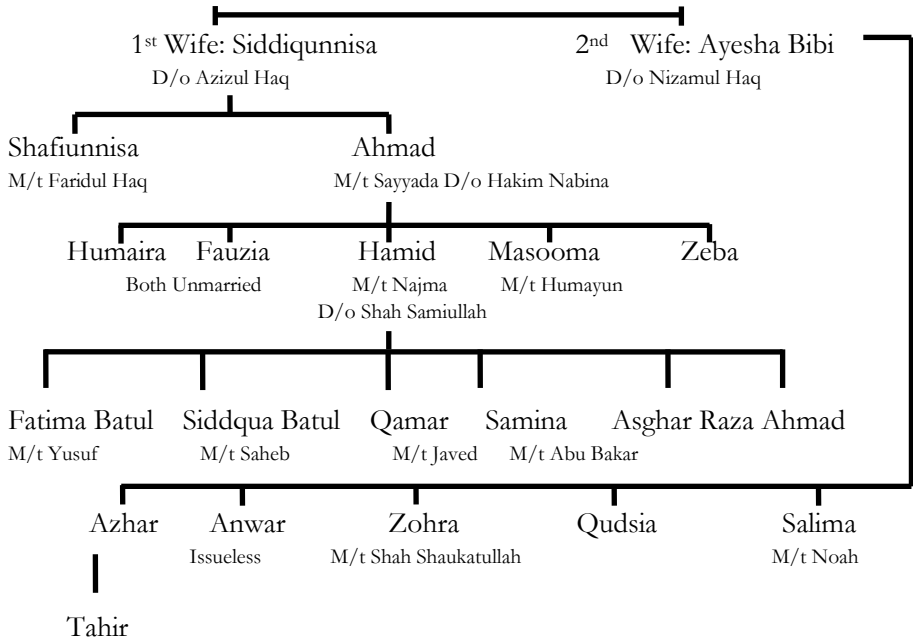


Mahmoodul Haq S/o Zahoorul Haq  
M/t Zainab Bibi D/o Moulvi Abdul Ghafoor

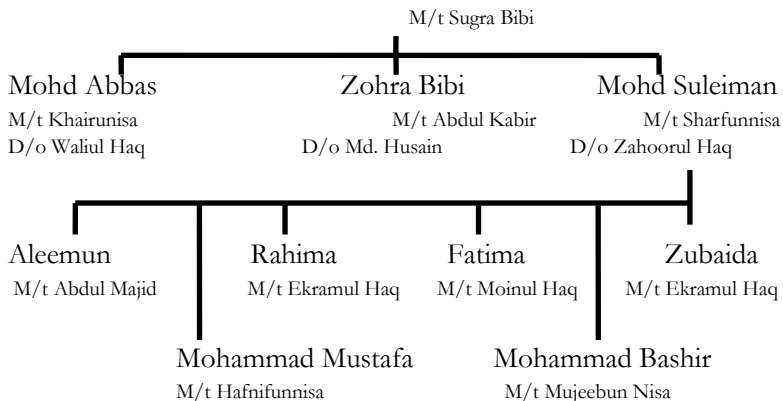




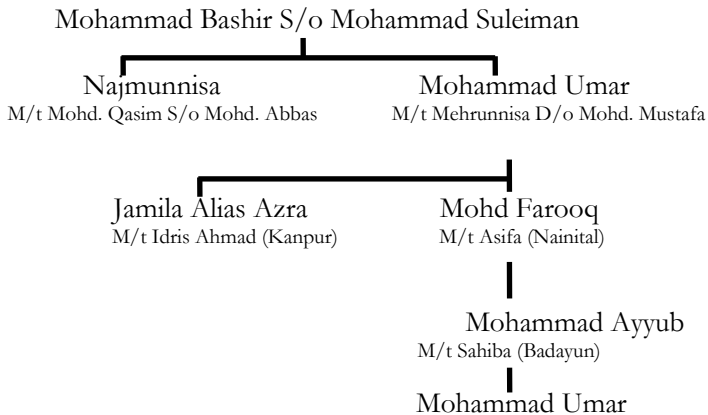
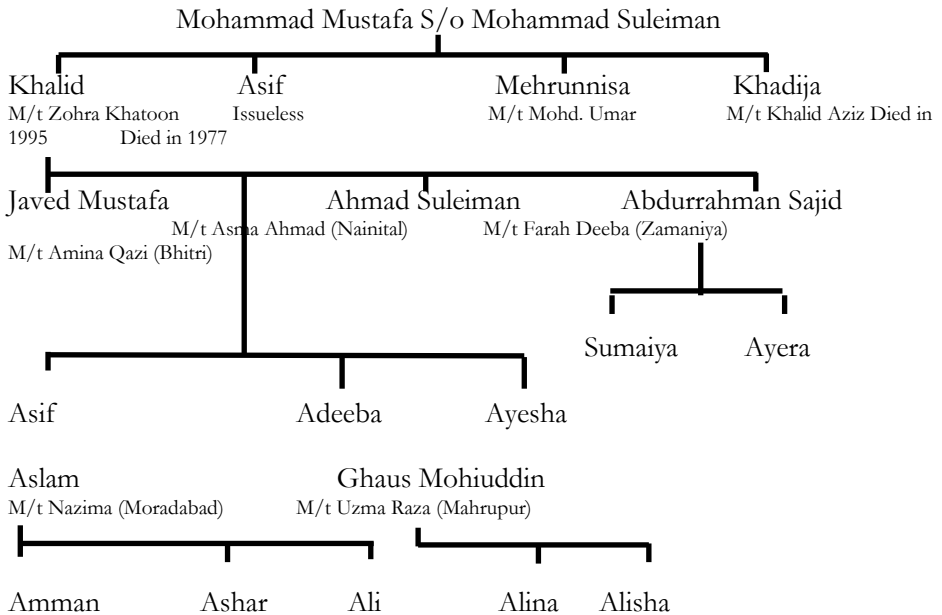
Mohammad Asghar S/o Mohammad Akbar



Altaf Husain S/o Wahid Ali

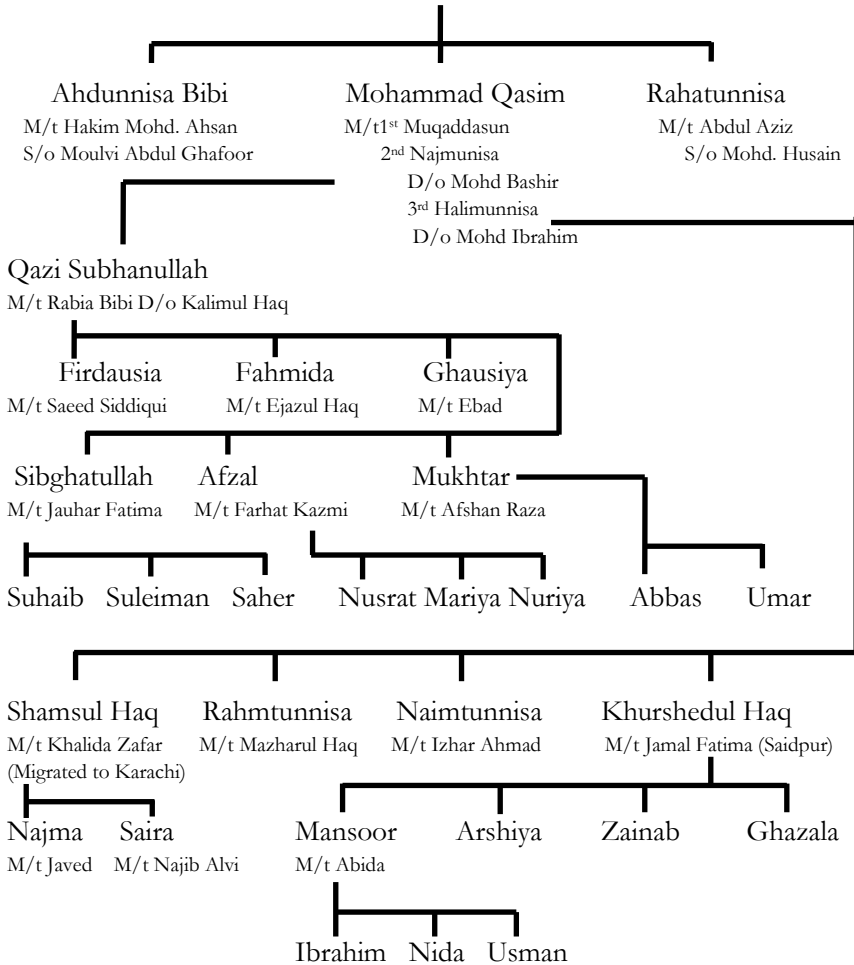




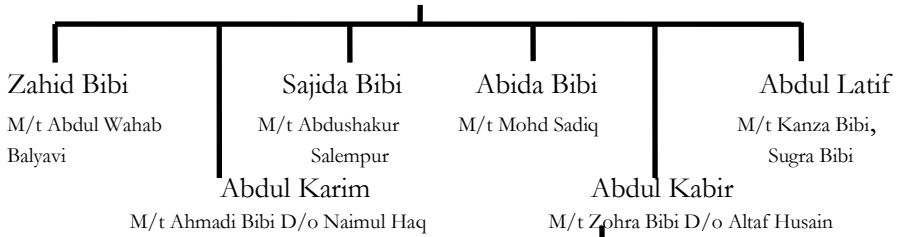


# Mohammad Abbas S/o Altaf Husain

M/t Khairunnisa D/o Waliul Haq



Mohd Husain S/o Wahid Ali  
M/t Rajwah Bibi



Muqaddasun  
M/t Mohd. Qasim

Abdul Majeed  
M/t Alimun Bibi  
D/o Altaf Husain

Jamilun Bibi  
M/T Mohd Farooq Khunambir Bibipur

**Brig. Mohd. Usman (M.C.V.)**

Alias Sher-E-Naushera (15 July 1912 – 3 July 1948)

Martyred in Indo-Pak War 1947-48

Brig. Ghufuran

Subhan

Azmatunnisa  
M/t Abdul Hafiz

Abdur Rasheed

M/t Sabira D/o Ekramul Haq

Najm Us Saqib  
M/t Nasima

Suhail  
M/t Arifa D/o Khusro Shah Nizami

Nazish Bibi  
M/t Salman Naqvi

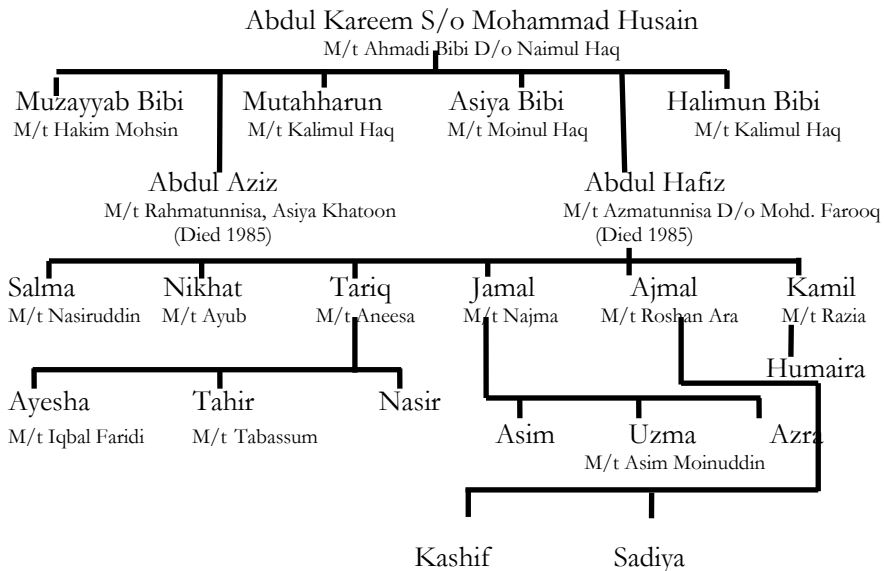
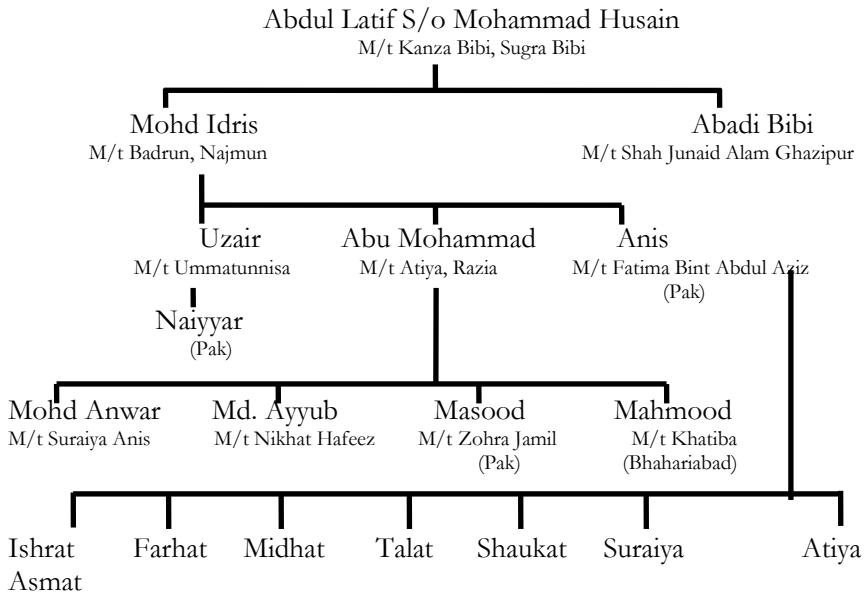
Tufail

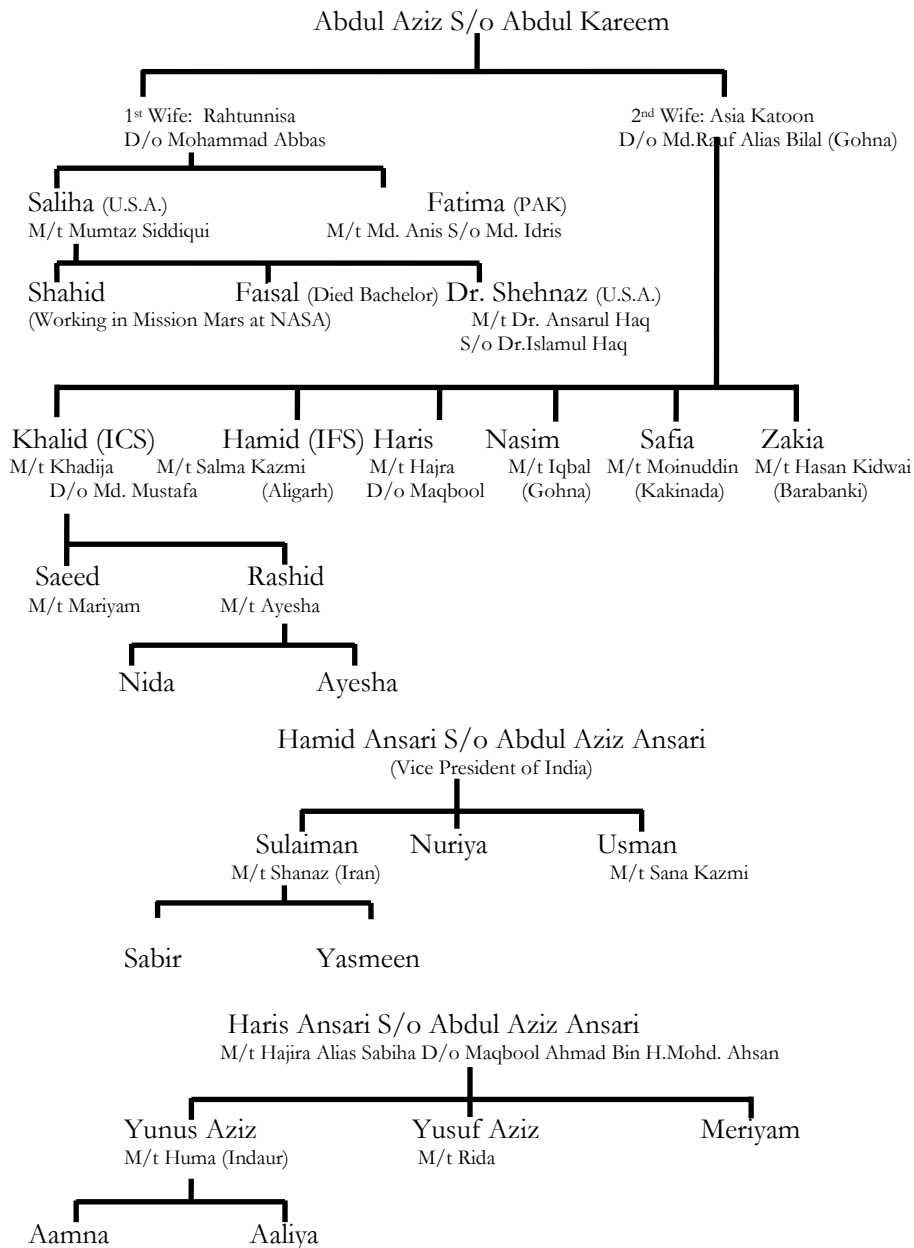
Farah Bibi  
M/t Irfanuddin

Uroos Us Seher  
M/t Mohammad Akbar  
S/o Abdul Malik

Urooj Bibi  
M/t Mohd. Sarvar

Mohsina Bibi





Qadir Baksh S/o Hasan Baksh

M/t Amina Bibi D/o Ahle Haq

Mohd Baksh  
M/t Batoolan Bibi

Bechan Bibi

Gauhar Bibi  
M/t Qazi Badiul Haq

Md Yusuf Bande Ali  
M/t Naziran Bibi

Mohd Khalil  
M/t Khatoon Bibi,  
Bano Bibi

Mohd Shfi  
M/t Badrunnisa,  
Khatoon Bibi ,  
Sughra Bibi

Mohd Habib  
M/t Shafia Bibi  
D/o Zahoorul Haq

Mohd Labib (I.L.)  
M/t Ruqaiya Bibi  
D/o Md. Sadiq

Munawwar Bibi  
M/t Noorul Haq

Zakia Bibi  
M/t Nazir Husain (Qazipura)

Ismail

Aqila  
M/t Raziuddin  
Qazipura

Zubair  
M/t Maimuna  
D/o Ghafoor Gohna

Mohd Junaid  
Qazipura

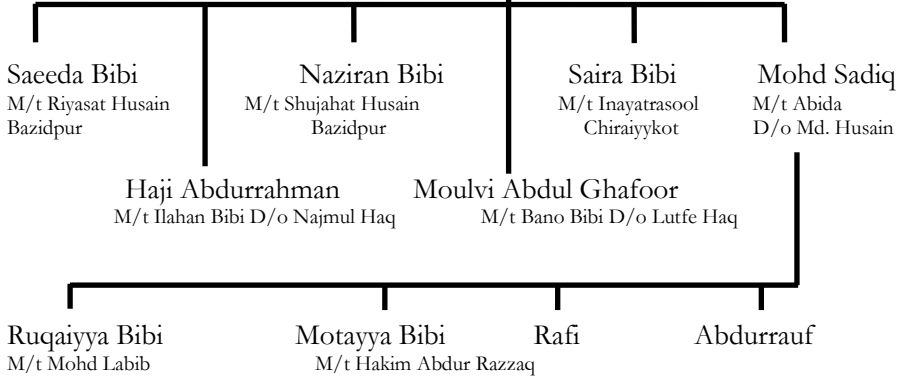
Mohd Basit  
Unmarried

Rasheedunnisa  
M/t Mazhar Balyavi

Jannatunnisa Bibi  
M/t Hasnain S/o Nazir Husain Qazipura

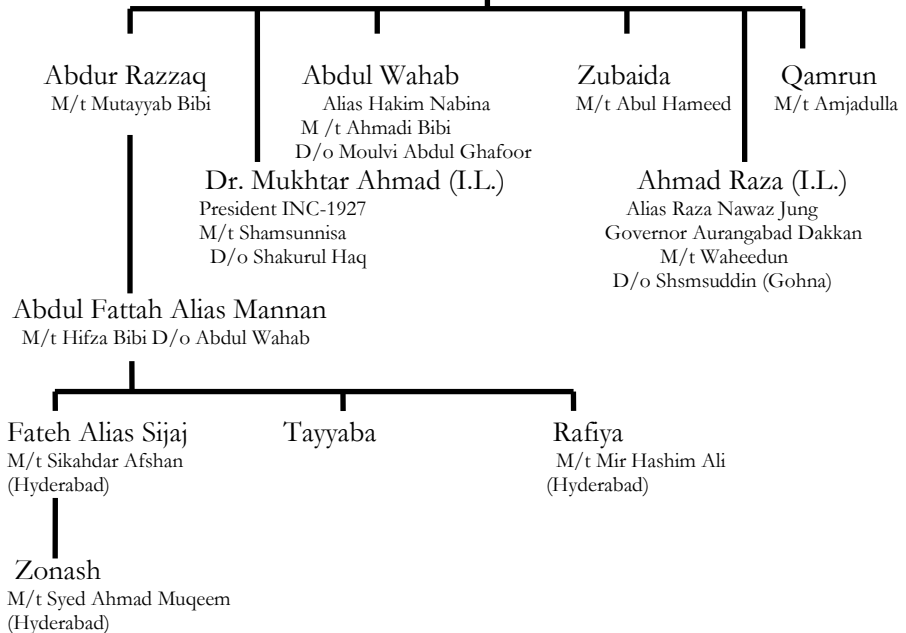
Mohommad Bakhsh S/o Qadir Bakhsh

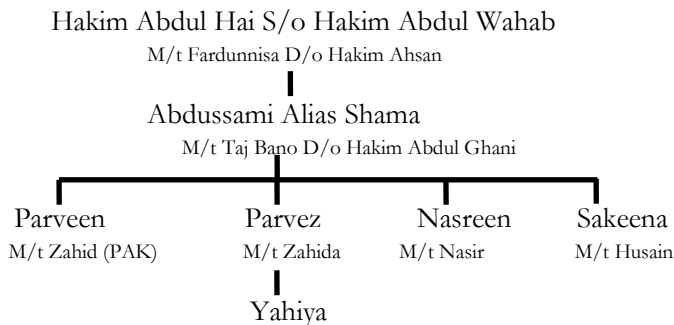
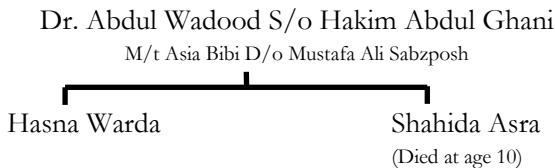
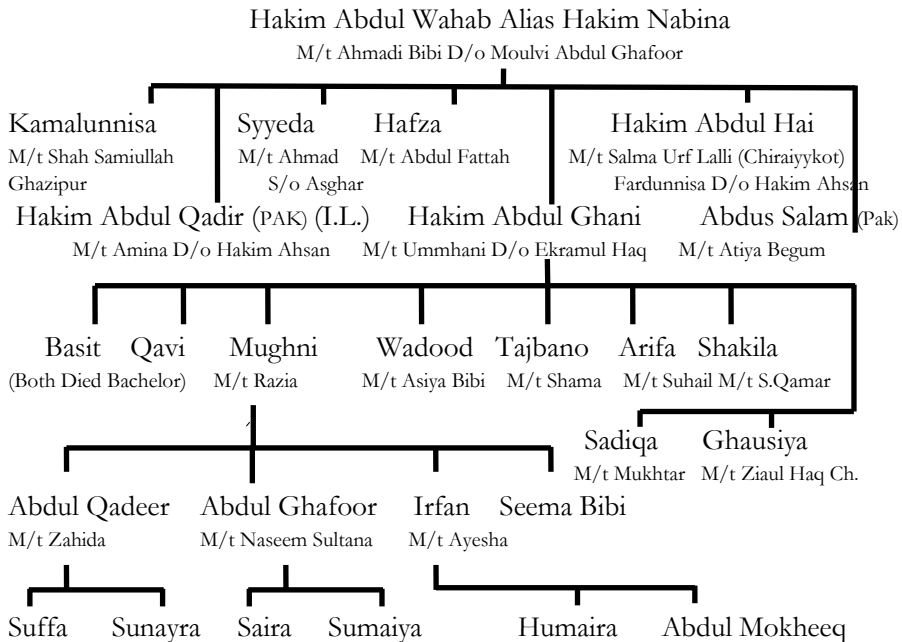
M/t Batoolan Bibi D/o Wahid Ali



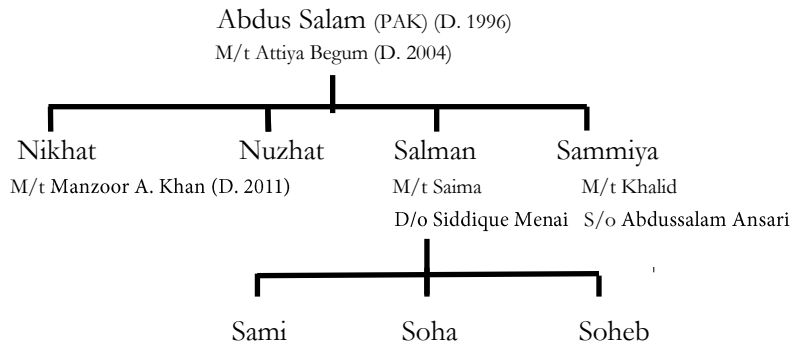
Haji Abdurrahman S/o Qadir Bakhsh

M/t Ilahan Bibi D/o Najmul Haq









# Haji Moulvi Abdul Ghafoor (RA) Alias Abdurraheem (DADA MIYAN)

M/t Bano Bibi D/o Badiul Haq  
(1839 -1896)



Mohd. Soofi  
Issueless

Mohsin  
M/t Hakimunnisa,  
Mozaippyab Bibi

Ahsan  
M/t Ahdunnisa  
D/o Mohd Abbas

Hasan  
M/t Anwari Begum  
(Agra)

Siddiqua Bibi  
M/t Maqbool Ahmad  
S/o Hakim Md. Ahsan  
(1923-2006)

Masood Ahmed (Pak - Died 1991) Aasia (PAK -Died 1993)  
M/t Aziz Jehan M/t Abdul Hafeez Khan  
D/o Abdul Qayyum Khan

Maqsood  
(Pakistan)  
M/t Gulnaz  
D/o Zulfiqar  
Ali (D.2013)

Mahmud  
(Canada)  
M/t Azra Firdous  
D/o Ghulam  
Rasool Butt

Nighat  
(U.S.A.)  
M/t Arif  
Siddiqui

Nilofur  
(Pakistan)  
M/t Qutub  
Ahmed

Husnara  
(U.S.A.)  
M/t Tassawwar  
Siddiqui

Jahanara  
(Pakistan)  
M/t Syed  
M. Shah

Naila  
(D). 1991)  
M/t M.  
Arshad

Hassan  
M/t Sheema  
D/o Syed Javed Mustafa

Sana

Asad

Masroor

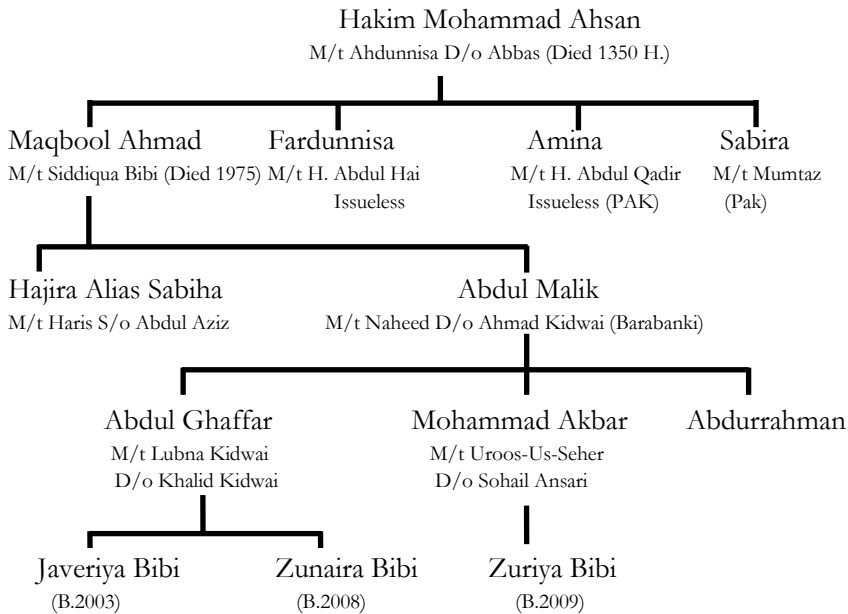
Nida  
M/t Imran Shaikh  
S/o Khalid Shaikh  
S/o Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi (RA)

Mukarram  
U.K.  
M/t Seema D/o Khuda Buksh Malik

Eesa Muhammed

Eshal

Ayana



**Note:** *This Family Tree has been painstakingly compiled and kept updated by Abdul Malik Ansari in Yusufpur, India. Additions of new family members and updating of information about those who pass away may be provided to his son Abdurrahman either through the Face Book Group “Ansaris of Yusufpur” or his email [yusufpur@gmail.com](mailto:yusufpur@gmail.com).*

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BACK COVER MATERIAL

## ANSARIS OF YUSUFPUR ANCESTRY, HISTORY, CHRONOLOGY

A fascinating history of Ansaris who began their journey in this mortal world a few thousand years ago in the peninsula of Arabia, then called Araba. As Islam grew and took in its fold various other lands and nations, Ansars, being valiant warriors, became part of just about every major battle that took place from Badr to Constantinople, Qandahar, Herat, and finally to India. Ansaris were not mere bystanders as history unfolded; they played significant roles and made valuable contributions in the fields of religion, medicine, literature, law, politics and media, no matter which part of the world they chose to settle in.

Since this book is about a branch of Ansaris who arrived in India, i.e. the Ansaris of Yusufpur, they will be covered in depth. However, as the first book on Ansaris in English language, it would also be of interest to all Ansaris whose ancestors moved from Madinah-e-Munawwara to other countries of the Gulf, Middle East, Iran, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and other parts of the world. It is, after all, a common lineage and history that all Ansaris share from the pre-Islamic era and this book provides a ready reference to the origin and history of their ancestors.